The 'Powers' of Personification: Rhetorical Purpose in the Book of Wisdom and the Letter to the Romans

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Walter de Gruyter

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Dedicated to Sadie,
the wife of my youth and the love of my life.

Preface

This book represents a slightly modified version of my Ph.D. thesis, written at the University of Aberdeen and the University of Tübingen, under the supervision of Dr. Simon J. Gathercole (Cambridge). At the beginning of my post-graduate programme, I had the opportunity to attend a colloquium on the topic of divine and human agency in Paul and his cultural environment. During one of the sessions, Professor John Barclay made a comment stressing that much more work still needed to be done in comparing the *Book of Wisdom* and Romans.

Inspired, I set out to compare divine and human agency in *Wisdom* and Romans. As I began to study, however, I kept running into a number of personifications which served as intermediate agents in the two works. To understand divine and human agency more fully in these works, it seemed that one needed to understand the role of these intermediate agents first. It was here that I discovered that while scholars have studied many of these personifications in detail, no one had investigated an individual personification with respect to the general use of the trope in the work. Furthermore, while scholars have often found value in comparing *Wisdom* and Romans, a comparison of the use of personification in these works had not yet been made, despite the striking parallels between them. At this point, my research took a life of its own; and with the guidance from other scholars, this book came to be.

Therefore, I would first like to thank Dr. Simon J. Gathercole for his invaluable insights and inexhaustible patience. I could not have hoped for a better supervisor. I would also like to thank my examiners, Dr. Edward Adams (King's College London) and Dr. Andrew Clarke (Aberdeen). A special thanks goes to Professor Dr. Herman Lichtenberger for his invitation for me to study at Tübingen, his interests in my research while I was there and his suggestion for me to submit my thesis to *BZNW*. Along these lines, I would like to thank the editors of this series for accepting my thesis, as well as Sabina Dabrowski for helping me format it.

Moreover, I am indebted to those who have encouraged me along the way: Professor Francis Watson, Dr. Peter J. Williams, Dr. David Capes, Dr. Rodney Woo, Dr. Troels Engberg-Pedersen, Professor Hans Dieter Betz, Professor Dr. Otfried Hofius as well as my colleagues at Ouachita Baptist University. In this endeavour I have had more than a little help from my friends. Preston Sprinkle and Ben Reynolds have sharpened many of the thoughts which appear in this work and have urged me to omit other embarrassing ones that do not.

At every turn, I was surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, Mark Deneui, Osvaldo Padilla, Casey Cease, David Morgan, Ben Elliot, Henry Nguyen, Patrick Reason, Ethan Worthington and many more. I would also like to thank Mary Romero and Stefanie Fisher for proof reading my rough draft.

These past three years would have not been possible without the support of Joseph and Charlene Miller, Bob and Dondra Hamilton, Brent and Lynn Conley, John and Cathy Jensen, Steven and Alicia Snow, Stephen and Karen Rankin, Mark and Shona Donaldson, Guy and Leasa Cantwell, James and Pam Ricks, and Matthew and Lizzie Bailey. A great thanks also goes to the churches which have supported us through these years: Grand Parkway, Wilcrest, Fairfield, Bridge of Don, Peterhead, Inverurie, Three Creeks, and Mt. Union.

I also wish to thank my parents, Joe and Nancy Dodson and my in-laws, Leon and Sherry Hines, Ben, Billie and Ginger Loftin. Of course, I so appreciate my everlasting splendours, Sadie, Mattie, Kinnon, Aidan and Iain. You are a constant reminder that life is bigger than my studies. In fact, you are my life and I love you. Above all, χάρις τῷ θεῷ.

Abbreviations

ABD	*The Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AnBib	Analecta Biblica
ANET	*Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*
BFChTh	Beiträge zur Förderung christlicher Theologie
Bib	*Biblica*
BSac	*Bibliotheca Sacra*
BTB	*Biblical Theology Bulletin*
BWANT	Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament
BZ	*Biblische Zeitschrift*
BZAW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für alttestamentliche Wissenschaft
CBC	Cambridge Bible Commentary
CBQ	*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
EKK	Evangelisch-katholischer Kommentar
ETR	*Etudes théologiques et religieuses*
FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
HThKNT	Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament
HR	*History of Religions*
HTR	*Harvard Theological Review*
HUCA	Hebrew Union College Annual
ICC	International Critical Commentary
Int	*Interpretation*
JAOS	*Journal of the American Oriental Society*
JBL	*Journal of Biblical Literature*
JEOL	*Jaarbericht Ex oriente lux*
JJS	*Journal of Jewish Studies*
JSJ	*Journal for the Study of Judaism*
JSP	*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*
JTS	*Journal of Theological Studies*
JWCI	*Journal of Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*

LD	*Lectio Divina*
Loeb	Loeb Classical Library
NIBC	New International Bible Commentary
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NICOT	New International Commentary on the Old Testament
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NT	*Novum Testamentum*
NTS	*New Testament Studies*
RB	*Revue Biblique*
REG	*Revue des etudes grecques*
SJT	*Scottish Journal of Theology*
SthU	*Schweizerische theologische Umschau*
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
VT	*Vetus Testamentum*
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
ZAW	*Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft*
ZrelGg	*Zeitschrift für Religion und Geistesgeschichte*
ZTHK	*Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche*
ZWTh	*Zeitschrift für Wissenschaftliche Theologie*

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Introduction: Theme, History of Research, Approach

I. Theme

Personifications occur throughout the *Book of Wisdom*.[1] By the invitation of the wicked and the envy of the devil, Death enters into the cosmos to be the lover and king of fools. As a conqueror in the fight for undefiled prizes, Lady Virtue wears a victor's crown as she marches gloriously in a triumphal procession. Joining God in the final fight against his foes, Creation rises up as the champion of the pious. Lightning leaps from the clouds, which toss wrathful balls of hail upon the impious; the sea and rivers rage against the fools, while the wind opposes them and sifts them like a storm. Refusing to pass any fool by, Dynamis and Dike exact punishment upon the wicked during the day of examination. Logos, the servant of God, jumps out of heaven, sword in hand and deals out death upon the enemies of God. Wrath wars against God's chosen people, but only until Aaron appears to overcome the nemesis with weapons of worship and the Word. As opposed to Hades, Sophia is saviour, the path to immortality, who, as co-creator, sits with the Lord on his throne and descends to deliver the elect from affliction.

Personifications also occur in Romans. Sin and Death stand opposite the reign of Grace and Righteousness. As cosmic lords they enter into the cosmos to rule over humanity. Moreover, the Law enters to increase trespass and rule over the unredeemed. Furthermore, Nomos speaks so that the world stands speechless, condemned by the very Law that many thought would bring life. Dikaiosyne surpasses the Law as she takes the words from the mouth of Moses only to manipulate them, showing that the gospel alone has always been the path to salvation. Along with the righteous, a pregnant Creation stretches out her neck in anticipation of redemption. Having been subjected to futility against her will, albeit in hope, she groans and suffers in the throes of birth pangs. Indeed, her fate is tied to that of the children of God, for when they receive adoption, the redemption of their bodies, then she shall be emancipated from her bondage as well.

1 Henceforth: *Wisdom*; also known as the *Wisdom of Solomon.*

Personifications, then, occur in both *Wisdom* and Romans in key passages discussing critical issues such as the entrance of death and the work of evil, the suffering of the righteous and the judgment of the wicked. As we shall see, each personification reveals information about the authors' views on such important topics as anthropology, cosmology, theodicy, soteriology, and eschatology. Furthermore, it is possible that the ideas promoted in *Wisdom* through personification may well represent ideas that were significant to Paul and even those that the apostle also promoted or rejected through personification and *vice versa*.

While scholars for at least three centuries have found value in comparing *Wisdom* and Romans, a comparison of the use of personification in these works has not yet been undertaken—despite the striking parallels between them. For instance, in their respective discussions on the origin of evil, both the author of *Wisdom* (the sage) and Paul personify Death as a ruler who enters into the cosmos; and in their discussions about the suffering of the elect and the day of the Lord, both personify Creation (κτίσις). Furthermore, while scholars have studied many of these personifications in detail, they have not considered each individual case in its relationship to all the personifications in the respective work, the parts in light of the whole.

In this work, we are most concerned with two questions: 1) Are there any common contexts in which the sage in *Wisdom* and Paul in Romans employ personification? 2) For what purposes do the authors employ personification? Deducing the contexts and purposes of these personifications can help us better understand each book and perhaps add to our understanding of the general use of personification in Second Temple Judaism.

Although both authors lived and wrote within the period of Second Temple Judaism, the sage and Paul were different kinds of people with vastly different ideas. Nevertheless, as we shall see, each author shares ideas and treats issues that were significant for the other author. In fact, "almost all modern commentators admit that the common ground" between the traditions in *Wisdom* and Paul "is considerable."[2] Therefore, in such a study, *Wisdom* can possibly shed light upon "dunkle schwierige Ausführungen des Apostels."[3] For this reason, "as material for the understanding of Paul, the Wisdom of Solomon is of central importance. Scholarship must take full account of it."[4]

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2 Simon J. Gathercole, *Where is Boasting?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 68 fn 137. According to De Silva: "the most pervasive influence of *Wisdom* surfaces in the writings of Paul," [David A. deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 150. De Silva rejects the idea that Paul was only familiar with similar ideas as *Wisdom* since there are "numerous and impressive points of contact between Paul and *Wisdom*" (p. 150 fn. 44)].

3 Eduard Grafe, "Das Verhaltniss der Paulinischen Schriften zur Sapientia Salomonis" *Theologische Abhandlungen* (1892), 286.

4 James Barr, *Biblical Faith and Natural Theology* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1993), 78.

We believe the converse is true as well: for the understanding of *Wisdom*, the writings of Paul are of great import since the numerous parallel expressions in the two works "enhance the impression that they might profitably be read together."[5] So also, William Sanday and Arthur Headlam conclude:

> It is interesting to contrast a Jew [i.e. the sage] who has learnt many maxims which conflict with his nationalism but yet retains his narrow sympathies with the Christian Apostle [i.e. Paul] full of broad sympathy and deep insight, who sees in human affairs a purpose of God for the benefit of the whole world being worked out.[6]

Another issue contributing to the value of comparing *Wisdom* and Romans is the possible dependency of Romans on *Wisdom* as supported by many scholars.[7] It has even been said that such dependency is "common place among scholars today,"[8] so that in places (e.g. Rom. 1.18-32), "there is no good reason to doubt that Paul is consciously basing his argument on the template provided by *Wisdom,*"[9] and in other places, that certain passages in *Wisdom*

---

5 B.R. Gaventa, "The Rhetoric of Death in the Wisdom of Solomon and the Letters of Paul," in *The Listening Heart*, ed. Kenneth G. Hoglund (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 127.

6 William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *The Epistle to the Romans*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1895), 51-52, parenthesis mine.

7 This consensus was strong from the mid-1800s to early 1900s. Much of this was due to the article by Grafe, "Verhaltniss," 251-286. See also Henry Thackeray, *The Relation of St Paul to Contemporary Jewish Thought* (London: Macmillan, 1900), 50-52. The consensus was first challenged by Gunkel [H. Gunkel, *Wirkungen des Heiligen Geistes*, 2 ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprechts Verlag, 1899), 79-80]. For more modern discussions see Gaventa, "Rhetoric," 127-141; Klaus Haacker, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1999), 48, 119. Bruce W. Longenecker, *The Triumph of Abraham's God* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 48 fn. 26; Richard B. Hays, "Wisdom according to Paul," in *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found?* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999), 112; Eduard Schweizer, *Beiträge zur Theologie des Neuen Testaments* (Zürich: Zwingli Verlag, 1970), 83-95.

8 C. Marvin Pate, *The Reverse of the Curse* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 233. Pate argues in detail for Paul's dependency on *Wisdom* (pp. 139-145; 233-236). See also C. H. Dodd, *The Epistle of Paul to the Romans*, 12 ed. (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1947), 27; James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 56-57; Richard Bell, *No One Seeks God* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1988), 76; Edward Adams, *Constructing the World* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 173.

9 Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark 2004), 405. Parenthesis mine. Although Paul's dependence on the sage "expresses a degree of independence," according to Watson, "Rom. 1.18-32 follows *Wisdom* 13-14 not just at individual points but in the whole construction of the argument" (pp. 407-408). See also Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, vol. 1 (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), 96-97: "Besonders enge Beruhrungen mit *Weisheit* legen sogar die Vermutung nahe, dass Paulus sie nach dem literarischen Vorbild dieses Buches ausgearbeitet haben kann"; and Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 72. Watson also sees the employment of the Destroyer from Exodus in Numbers by both Paul and the sage as evidence of dependency; however, he prefers the term "engagement" to "dependence," [Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 404-405].

even serve as the key to understanding parts of Romans.[10] Although the view of Paul's dependency on *Wisdom* is not without variation,[11] nor challenge,[12] most admit at least a familiarity of the apostle with the book.[13] However, even if the tides of opinion were turned, in the least, there is value in comparing *Wisdom* with Romans because it is another piece of contemporaneous theological literature.[14]

In sum, we have demonstrated that a number of scholars suggest that a study of *Wisdom* can help one better understand Romans, especially since a general scholarly consensus concludes that Paul probably drew from *Wisdom* in his composition of that letter. We have proposed that due to many parallels and its status as a contemporaneous piece of theological literature, Romans can help one understand *Wisdom* as well.

Now, we shall look at other scholars who have found value in comparing *Wisdom* and Romans, as well as those who have dealt in detail with personification in *Wisdom* and in Romans.

II. History of Research

This section will be made up of two parts. First, we shall review those who have compared *Wisdom* and Romans. We shall discuss here that none of these works has compared the use of personification in *Wisdom* and Romans, nor has Romans 5-8 played a considerable part within these former comparisons, which focus primarily on *Wisdom* 11-19 and Romans 1-2; 9-11. Secondly, we

10 Anders Nygren, *Der Römerbrief*, 3 ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1959), 87.

11 This variation ranges from Paul's authoritative employment of *Wisdom* to his polemical argument against it. For the former, Barr argues that due to the similarities, it seems that Paul knew the book and if he knew the book, then it seems it counted for him as authoritative [Barr, *Biblical Faith and Natural Theology*, 58-60]. For the latter, see Nygren, *Römerbrief*, 89-90—"Paul does not invent a partner, he challenges the author of *Wisdom*"; so also Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 410-411: Paul shadows the sage in Romans 1 but then "turns to him and denounces him" as he consciously uses "the language of the other text (*Wisdom*) against it."

12 Johannes Fichtner, *Weisheit Salomos* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1938), 9; F. Focke, *Die Entstehung der Weisheit Salomos* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1913), 113-126; Otto Michel, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1978), 16-18; E. Earle Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957), 79. These authors attribute the similarities to a common tradition or milieu or both.

13 E.g. Bell, *No One Seeks God*, 76; Gaventa, "Rhetoric," 128; G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 185; Brendan Byrne, *Romans* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1996), 65.

14 Nikolaus Walter, "Sapientia Salomonis und Paulus," in *Die Weisheit Salomos im Horizont Biblischer Theologie*, ed. Hans Hübner (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1993), 86. So also Watson: "Even if Paul's engagement were actually with a shared tradition rather than a specific text, the analysis would still be valid," [Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 405].

shall concentrate on those who have dealt with individual personifications in *Wisdom* and in Romans. Here, we shall observe that most of these discussions have been concerned with the nature of a certain personification either as a rhetorical device or a supra-human power, rather than looking at how each personification relates to the other personifications or examining how their individual purposes work to fulfil the overall purpose in the works.

1. History of Comparison

EDUARD GRAFE (1892)

The most influential comparison of the writings of Paul with *Wisdom* is an article by Eduard Grafe,[15] whose conclusion, that it is "mindestens höchst wahrscheinlich"[16] that Paul had read *Wisdom*, was widely accepted in British and American scholarship, and in continental theology as well.[17] Beginning with B. Kuinoel's work in 1794, Grafe discusses scholars who have made mention of striking parallels between Wis. 5.16-23 and Eph. 6.13-17, and between Wis. 13.1-9 and Rom. 1.20-32.[18] Grafe considers the teachings on predestination in *Wisdom* 12-15 and Rom. 9.22-23 as well as the treatment of pagan idolatry in Wis. 13.1-9 and Rom. 1.18-32 as the most significant parallels between *Wisdom* and Romans.[19]

Grafe points therefore to three primary thoughts which *Wisdom* and Romans share about predestination: humanity is reckoned as nothing before God, the Lord patiently endures the wicked even though he knows they will not repent, and the fate of the wicked stands in juxtaposition to that of the children of God. He infers that both treatments contain the same structure and use many of the same words. Furthermore, in his comparison of the authors' treatments of idol worship, Grafe admits that themes such as the foolishness of idolatry, the warning against the worship of creation, and the revelation of God in the world are ideas found elsewhere in the Old Testament (OT); however,

15 Grafe, "Verhaltniss," 253-286.

16 Ibid., 285.

17 Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament*, 77. E.g. Thackeray, *The Relation of St Paul to Contemporary Jewish Thought*, 50-52. The consensus was first challenged by Gunkel [Gunkel, *Wirkungen des Heiligen Geistes*, 79-80]. So also Focke, *Die Entstehung der Weisheit Salomos*, 113-126. Those like Gunkel and Focke make the same comparisons only to show other parallels with other works in order to point to a common tradition rather than dependency.

18 Grafe includes the contested letters of Paul in his comparison as well [Grafe, "Verhaltniss," 257].

19 Grafe also considers the relationship of the body to the soul in Wis. 9.15 and 2 Cor. 5.14 as a significant parallel [Ibid., 274-276].

he insists that the parallels between *Wisdom* and Romans are closer to each other than these other references.[20]

As "other noteworthy relationships," Grafe discusses Wis. 1.13-16; 2.24 and Rom. 5.12; 8.19-25. He deduces that the authors employ almost the exact phrase ("Death entered into the cosmos") as they present the thought that the current condition of creation was not deliberate.[21] Next, Grafe briefly mentions the common idea of God's patient endurance with sinners for the sake of repentance (Wis. 11.23; 12.10, 19; Rom. 2.4), the use of similar rhetorical questions (Wis. 12.12; Rom. 8.33), as well as the theme of the complete righteousness that results from knowing God (Wis. 15.2-3; Rom. 3.28; 5.1; 6.11-14).[22] The scope of Grafe's article was primarily to argue the influence of *Wisdom* on Paul's letters. Despite his thoroughness in many areas, Grafe made no mention of the use of personification in the two works.

SANDAY AND HEADLAM (1895)

A few years later, Sanday and Headlam also undertook detailed research into the parallels between Rom. 1.18-32 and *Wisdom* 12-15 and between Romans 9-11 and *Wisdom* 10-14. Sanday and Headlam place what they see as direct quotations from *Wisdom* side by side with verses in Romans 1.

Rom. 1.20	Wis. 13.1, 5, 23; 18.9
Rom. 1.21	Wis. 13.1
Rom. 1.22	Wis. 12.24
Rom. 1.23	Wis. 12.1; 14.8; 13.10, 13, 14
Rom. 1.25	Wis. 13.17; 14.11, 21
Rom. 1.24	Wis. 14.12
Rom. 1.26	Wis. 14.16, 22-24
Rom. 1.29	Wis. 14.25-27

From these parallels, Sanday and Headlam infer that the resemblances are so strong that there can be no question that Paul directly quotes the sage. According to them, even the sage's and the apostle's lines of argument are exactly the same, as they progress from natural religion to idolatry to vice lists. These parallels lead the authors to the conclusion that Paul had devoted considerable time to the study of *Wisdom*.[23]

Sanday and Headlam also extend Grafe's comparisons of Romans 9-11 with *Wisdom* 10-14. Here, they argue for a "definite literary dependence,"

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20 Ibid., 270-271.

21 Our investigation of their use of personified Creation, however, will demonstrate that the sage and Paul's cosmology are not as close as Grafe suggests. See chapter 13.

22 Grafe compares other noteworthy parallels between *Wisdom* and Paul's letters to the Corinthians as well as between Wis. 5.17-20 and Eph. 6.11-17.

23 Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 51-52.

since 1) the sage and Paul discuss the same subject (the philosophy of history); 2) the sage contrasts Israel and Egypt while Paul contrasts Moses and Pharaoh; 3) they both insist on the impossibility of resisting God, who 4) is the divine potter, and who 5) patiently practises forbearance with the non-elect.[24] Despite all of the similarities between the two works, Sanday and Headlam hold that in contrast to Paul the sage vacillates from universal statements to those of strong nationalism.

Although Sanday and Headlam go to great lengths to show the parallels between the two works, they do not discuss the role of personification. Since the comparison by Sanday and Headlam, many scholars and most commentaries also discuss parallels between *Wisdom* and Romans; however, none is as extensive and most are variations of this work by Sanday and Headlam.[25]

ANDERS NYGREN (1947)

Anders Nygren also mentions the parallels between *Wisdom* 13 and Rom. 1.18-32. In contrast to Sanday and Headlam, however, Nygren says these "points of contact" are not enough to maintain Pauline dependency on *Wisdom*.[26] Nevertheless, according to him, this dependency becomes obvious at the beginning of Romans 2. [27] In fact, Nygren insists that *Wisdom* 11-15 is the key to understanding Romans 2,[28] where Paul directly challenges the sage on four points: 1) that the wrath of God is reserved for Gentiles alone (Wis. 11.9-10; 12.22); 2) that the knowledge of God keeps the Jew from divine wrath (Wis. 15.2-3); 3) that God is patient with his enemies affording them the opportunity to repent (Wis. 11.23; 12.10-11); and 4) that if a Jew faces condemnation, all that person has to do is remember the kindness and longsuffering of God (Wis. 12.22).[29]

In Romans 2, Paul contends with these very points; when the Jews judge the Gentiles as under wrath, the Jews condemn themselves, since they are

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24 Ibid., 267-268.

25 E.g. Focke, *Die Entstehung der Weisheit Salomos*, 113-126; Otto Michel, "Paulus und seine Bibel," *BFChTh* II, no. 18 (1929), 14-18; Schweizer, *Beiträge zur Theologie*, 83-95; Dodd, *Romans*, 27; Thackeray, *The Relation of St Paul to Contemporary Jewish Thought*, 223-231; Eduard Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa*, 2 vols., vol. 2 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1909), 467, 474. James D. G. Dunn, *Christology in the Making*, 2 ed. (London: SCM Press, 1989), 306 fn. 9; Leander E. Keck, *Romans* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 62; Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 125, 602; Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 56-57.

26 Nygren, *Römerbrief*, 87

27 Ibid., 88.

28 "Diese Kapitel im Buch der Weisheit enthalten geradezu den Schlüssel zum zweiten Kapitel des Römerbriefes," (Ibid., 87).

29 Ibid., 88

under wrath as well. God's kindness and goodness not only give the Gentiles the opportunity to repent, they actually lead the Gentiles to repentance. Thus, Nygren posits: "Paul does not invent a fictive sparring partner; he does not put words in the mouth of the Jew." Rather, Paul takes the very words from the sage and responds, "You are also without excuse."[30]

PAUL-GERHARD KEYSER (1971)

The most extensive comparison between *Wisdom* and Romans comes from an unpublished dissertation by Paul-Gerhard Keyser.[31] According to Keyser, the reasons *Wisdom* and Romans can be compared are that: both interpret pericopes from the OT, speak about the same God, write in Greek, maintain the sovereignty of God over all humanity, separate humanity into the elect and the non-elect, discuss both the individual and collective whole from these two groups, and emphasise the same concepts.[32] With particular interest in anthropology, Keyser compares *Wisdom* with Romans in light of eight themes:

1. Universal aspects
2. The righteous
3. The ungodly
4. The advantages of Israel
5. The decimation of Israel
6. The rejection of Israel
7. The problem of God's righteousness
8. Divine mercy

The first three themes deal with the problem of the suffering of Israel and individual election, while the remaining themes deal with the corporate problem of Israel in history. Under the heading of "universal aspects," Keyser discusses how both authors insist God is sovereign over all humanity and how both classify humanity as godly and ungodly, Jew and Gentile. This inference causes Keyser to investigate how the sage and apostle perceive the elect. As with Nygren, Keyser also deduces that the sage considers Israel the elect and therefore promises that the elect shall be set apart from judgment. Paul, on the

30 Ibid., 88-90.

31 Paul-Gerhard Keyser, "Sapientia Salomonis und Paulus: Eine Analyse der Sapientia. Salomonis und ein Vergleich ihrer theologischen und anthropologischen Probleme mit denen des Paulus im Römerbrief" (Martin-Luther-Universität, 1971), 2 vols. Cf. Walter, "Sapientia Salomonis und Paulus," 83-108.

32 Keyser, "Sapientia Salomonis und Paulus", 225-226.

other hand, insists that Israel shall experience judgment as well as the Gentiles.[33]

Moreover, Keyser concludes that for Paul no one is righteous and thus all experience the wrath of God. For the sage, however, only the fools are ungodly, and only they experience wrath.[34] Keyser also compares Rom. 9.4-5 with statements from *Wisdom* and infers that these statements referring to the advantages of Israel are so similar that the authors must have drawn from the same "Begriffsmaterial."[35] On the other hand, Keyser concludes that the authors could not be farther apart when discussing the decimation of Israel. The sage distances God from the occasions when Israel experiences wrath and instead concentrates on God as the protector and saviour of Israel. In contrast, Paul presents God in direct relationship to wrath.[36] On the topic of the rejection of Israel, Keyser only notes that, unlike Paul, the sage does not mention this subject.[37]

Keyser also compares Wis. 12.11-18 with Rom. 9.13-11.32, where the authors discuss the problem of God's righteousness. After mentioning the numerous words these passages have in common,[38] Keyser concludes that according to the sage people cannot question God, since he is their creator, whose righteousness is seen in his promise to destroy the wicked; Paul also claims that no one can question God, since he is the creator in complete control of his creatures, whom he places under disobedience for the sake of mercy.[39]

Finally, Keyser states that both authors struggle with God's universal compassion and his seeming lack of mercy upon Israel. While both authors wrestle with the same question, they come up with two very different answers. According to the sage, God loves all that he created, even the wicked.[40] For the sage, God's mercy is demonstrated by a "grace period" for the impious, who will be destroyed once their time is up. In contrast, Paul believes God's saving action through Christ is the chief demonstration of divine mercy.[41]

While Keyser's research provides numerous insights into both books, the comparison is concerned primarily with *Wisdom* 1-5; 11-19 and Romans 1-3, 9-12, and does not highlight the role of personification in *Wisdom* and Romans.

33 Ibid., 141-142.
34 Ibid., 143-160.
35 Ibid., 161-183.
36 Ibid., 195.
37 Ibid., 195-205.
38 Ibid., 213-214.
39 Ibid., 214.
40 Cf. Wis. 12.1-5
41 Ibid., 215-225.

BEVERLY GAVENTA (1987)

Beverly Gaventa compares the sage's rhetoric of death with that of Paul's letters. She infers that 1) the sage and Paul "assert God's power over death itself and locate immortality in the power of God," that 2) in both *Wisdom* and the letters of Paul, "we find the claim that death and sin are connected with one another," and that 3) the sage and apostle "contrast reality with appearance, insisting that only the righteous know God's mystery."[42]

On the other hand, Gaventa concludes that in *Wisdom,* Death is a puzzle which the sage attempts to unravel. [43] Rather than "the abstract notion of the immortality of Wisdom," for Paul "immortality has its locus in mythos (1 Cor 15)."[44] Moreover, Paul discusses death in relation to "the impending character of the eschaton," while the sage "maintains the attitude that the world goes on." Finally, the sage discusses death in its relationship to theodicy, but Paul only comments about death in order to "articulate the implications of the new event of the gospel."[45] Such conclusions beg the question: How does Paul's theodicy compare to the sage's when Paul does deal with the problem, such as in Romans 5-8?[46] Even though her topic is death, Gaventa does not discuss or compare the use of the personification of it in *Wisdom* and Romans.

JAMES BARR (1993)

In his discussion of natural theology, James Barr also compares *Wisdom* 13-15 with Rom. 1.18-32. Barr states that the sage and Paul address the particular emphasis of worshipping the created thing in place of the creator and the specific condemnation of the role of animals, which seems to be lacking or muted in passages such as Isaiah 40. In other words, he concludes that the OT lacks a theory that provides the steps from creation to idolatry, and from idolatry to moral perversion—steps that are extremely conspicuous in *Wisdom* and Romans. Although *Wisdom* is more inclined than Paul to give an explanation of what went wrong,[47] still both authors begin from creation and render an account of the way in which people, failing to recognise the reality of the creator God, entered into idolatry and then into vilest immorality. He deduces that while neither *Wisdom* nor Romans contains a pure natural theology, both have theological elements that naturally lead to such a theology.[48]

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42 Gaventa, "Rhetoric," 139.
43 Ibid., 139-140.
44 Ibid.
45 Ibid.
46 See chapter 14.
47 Barr, *Biblical Faith and Natural Theology*, 66.
48 Ibid., 69-71.

FRANCIS WATSON (2004)

Francis Watson compares the sage's interpretation of the narratives in Numbers with Paul's interpretation of the same narratives.[49] For the sage, this interpretation can be seen mainly in *Wisdom* 16-18 and for Paul in 1 Cor. 10.6-8; Rom. 7.7-11. Watson points out that from the incident with the quails (Num. 11.1-34), Paul derives the motif of illicit desire, which the apostle takes as "the key to all the post-Sinai episodes of rebellion in the desert (1 Cor. 10.6). This desire was evoked by the law's prohibition, and issued in death (Rom. 7.7-11)."[50] In contrast, for the sage, the quail event represents God's generous provision of a more varied diet (Wis. 16.1-4).[51]

So also, from the plague of snakes in Num. 21.4-9, Paul demonstrates that desire leads to death (1 Cor. 10.7-8; Rom. 7.9). In contrast, the sage takes the whole event as a positive reminder of the divine commandments (Wis. 16.5-14).[52] That is, from this event, Paul maximises the horror which "testifies to the threatening reality of the divine judgment," while the sage minimises the horror so that it would testify to "the saving power of the divine word" instead.[53] Similarly, the sage is only interested in "the divine means of deliverance" through Aaron in the account of Num. 16.1-17.15, while Paul does not even mention Aaron, since the apostle interests himself only in "the punishment meted out."[54] Whereas the sage blends Exodus 14-17 with Numbers 11-21, Paul separates the two accounts—the former corresponds to a time without Torah (Rom. 7.9), while the latter to the time following the advent of the Law.[55]

Watson attributes these differences to the authors' respective homiletical strategies: the sage draws from these passages to encourage; Paul to warn.[56] Whereas the sage "does his utmost to conceal" the history of Israel's disaster, focusing instead on the provision of God in the accounts, Paul exploits this history, by focusing on the punishment. Both authors, however, still read the

49 I.e. Num. 11.1-34; 21.4-9; 16.1-17.15.

50 Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 381.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

53 Ibid,, 380-381.

54 Ibid., 382.

55 Ibid., 383.

56 Ibid. Watson finds parallels with Psalms 105 and 106 (104 and 105), where the former (a hymn of thanksgiving) focuses on God's saving action in Exodus and the latter (a communal confession) Israel's rebellious acts at the Red Sea and following events. "The author of *Wisdom* stands closer to Psalm 105, Paul to Psalm 106: but there is—arguably—no reason why the two later interpretations should not peacefully coexist and indeed complement one another (pp. 383-384)."

stories of the Red Sea, manna, and water from the rock as testimonies to "God's saving action on behalf of the people of Israel."[57]

Watson also compares *Wisdom* 13-15 with Rom. 1.18-32. He demonstrates that while both authors "assert that the creator is manifest in his works," they do not "reproduce the conventional Stoic argument for the existence of deity."[58] The sage "speaks of ignorance and of possible search for God" and a "way from creation to God" that is still open; in contrast, Paul "speaks of a suppressed knowledge of God."[59] In his discussion, Paul "conflates the worship of divine and of human artefacts, carefully distinguished by the author of *Wisdom*."[60] Both authors, however, mention idolatry as the root of all evils and illustrate this point with similar vice lists (although Paul does not list sexual and non-sexual vices together as does the sage).[61]

Finally, Watson notes the greatest divergence between the sage and the apostle: "Paul faces the fact that the author of *Wisdom* strives to suppress," namely, that Holy Israel is complicit in the same idolatry and sin that she prefers to ascribe to the Gentiles.[62] Despite the differences, "there appears to be little or nothing in either text with which the author of the other would have disagreed."[63]

In summary, Watson writes:

> Paul and the author of *Wisdom* are agreed that the scriptural narrative of Exodus and Numbers bears paradigmatic witness to the nature of divine saving action. The earlier author finds here a virtually unqualified distinction between God's saving action towards the holy people and his punitive action towards their enemies. By way of the technique of displacement, the narrative is rewritten along these lines. In contrast, Paul chooses not to conceal the fact that the gift bestowed at Sinai led immediately to catastrophe, but rather to highlight it and to find paradigmatic significance in it.[64]

Watson does not compare the role of the personification of Logos and Wrath in *Wisdom* 18 with that of Law and Sin in Romans 5-7. Even with the valuable comparisons made in these works, Monya McGlynn's conclusion remains true:

57 Ibid., 383.
58 Ibid., 406.
59 Ibid., 406-407.
60 Ibid., 407.
61 Ibid., 408.
62 Ibid., 411.
63 Ibid., 408.
64 Ibid., 411.

> The coincidences of topics between Paul's epistle to the Romans and *Wisdom*: the corruption of idolatry, the judgment of God, the problem of sin and Adam's fall, the glory inherent in creation and the long struggle with the place of Israel, have never been adequately studied and compared.[65]

2. The History of Research of Personification in *Wisdom* and Romans

Having discussed those who have compared *Wisdom* and Romans, we shall now turn our attention to those who have dealt with individual personifications in the respective works. We shall observe that these authors are chiefly concerned with the *nature* of a certain personification in discussions of where the personification falls upon the spectrum between a rhetorical device and a supra-human power.

Our goal here is to demonstrate that these works are primarily interested in ontological questions rather than the literary and rhetorical questions which interest us. We shall first discuss those personifications which have been treated in *Wisdom*, namely Death, Sophia, and Logos (2.1). Since most of what has been written about personification in Romans is on the nature of Sin, we shall only survey the debate over the personification of it in Romans (2.2).

2.1 Personifications in *Wisdom*

DEATH

Although scholars have written in detail on the rhetoric and ambiguity of death in *Wisdom*,[66] in their pursuit to identify whether death refers to physical[67] or spiritual death,[68] most do not include the role of personification in this

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65 Monya McGlynn, *Divine Judgment and Divine Benevolence in the Book of Wisdom* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 222.

66 See Karina Martin Hogan, "The Exegetical Background of the 'Ambiguity of Death' in the Wisdom of Solomon" *JSJ* 30, no. 1 (1991), 1-24 and Michael Kolarcik, *The Ambiguity of Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-6* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991), 134-158.

67 See Maurice Gilbert, "Ge 1-3 dans le Livre de la Sagesse," *LD* 127 (1987), 327; Helmut Engel, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk GmbH, 1998), 57-59; J.J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 188; and C. Gutberlet, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Münster: 1874), 75.

68 See Giuseppe Scarpat, *Libro della Sapienza*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Brescia: Paideia, 1989), 163; David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979), 107; David Winston, "Theodicy in the Wisdom of Solomon," in *Theodicy in the World of the Bible*, ed. Antti Laato and J.C. De Moor (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 526-527; Gaventa, "Rhetoric," 133; J.P. Weisengoff, "Death and Immortality in the Book of Wisdom," *CBQ* 3 (1941), 109, 114; and Armin Schmitt, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Würzburg: Verlag, 1989), 40.

discussion. Yehoshua Amir, however, does concentrate on the figure and argues that Death and its synonyms here are much more than "a poetical way of speech." [69] Instead, behind the sage's personification of Death "looms the mythological figure of Thanatos," who even rivals God.[70]

Similarly, J.J. Collins connects Death in *Wisdom* with Mot, the ancient Near Eastern god of the netherworld: "Death was originally a deity in his own right, and in the monotheistic context of Judaism he still represents a mythical power whose relationship to God's creation is not clarified."[71] So also, Chrysostome Larcher relates Death to the power of evil which opposes God in the Qumran scrolls.[72] Likewise, Michael Kolarcik refers to the personification as "the dark image of Death," who is an "attractive yet illusory force which conducts human intelligence to a concession ultimately towards injustice" and which "exerts its power in the lives of humans by provoking a nihilistic view of mortality that issues in a dynamic of evil."[73]

In contrast, David Winston argues that death and the devil are only figures for the "irrational impulses that often drive human beings to vicious behaviour and lead them to spiritual death."[74] To some extent, Collins agrees with this viewpoint; the personification is a figurative way of expressing negative forces. Nevertheless, he concludes that, "Death is not quite de-mythologized here, since it is in fact personified."[75] These discussions focus mainly on the identity of Death as a poetical device or suprahuman power and do not consider how Death relates to the other personifications in *Wisdom*.

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69 Yehoshua Amir, "The Figure of Death in the 'Book of Wisdom'," *JJS* 30 (1979), 154-178 (p. 157).

70 Ibid. See also James M. Reese, *The Book of Wisdom, Song of Songs* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983), 31. Cf. John R. Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 52.

71 Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 189. He also notes the reference to Mot in the bible as well as the similarities between Death here and the figure of Belial found in the DSS. So also A.P. Hayman, "Mythology in the Wisdom of Solomon," *HTR* 30 (1999), 131. If one assumes an Alexandrian setting, how much did the Egyptian gods of death influence this personification?

72 Chrysostome Larcher, *Le Livre de la Sagesse*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Paris: Gabalda, 1983), 209.

73 Kolarcik, *Ambiguity*, 161, 176. See Winston's critique of Kolarcik for not addressing issues that such a personification brings forth in David Winston, "Review of 'The Ambiguity of Death' by Michael Kolarcik," *CBQ*, no. 56 (1994), 110-112.

74 Winston, "Theodicy," 527.

75 J.J. Collins, *Jewish Cult and Hellenistic Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 151-152.

SOPHIA

Similarly, much of the discussion surrounding Sophia in *Wisdom* centres on the question of whether she is a rhetorical device representing an attribute of God, an autonomous power, or something in between.[76] Alice Sinnott interprets Sophia as the first and posits that in all of Jewish Wisdom literature, personified Wisdom is a literary creation never "envisaged as a second god in a theological sense."[77] Similarly, according to Armin Schmitt, Sophia is only a "poetische Stilfigur,"[78] and according to Larcher, she is just a way to stress "un attribut ou une énergie divine en action."[79] So also, James Dunn insists that Sophia is only "a way of speaking about God himself, of expressing God's active involvement with his world and his people without compromising his transcendence."[80]

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76 Many hypotheses exist on the creation, development and identity of Lady Wisdom. It has been proposed that 1) she was originally a goddess, similar to those of Israel's neighbours [e.g. Helmer Ringgren, *Word and Wisdom* (Lund: Hakan Ohlssons Boktryckeri, 1947), 128-148; H. Conzelmann, "The Mother of Wisdom," in *The Future of Our Religious Past: Essays in Honour of Rudolf Bultmann*, ed. James M. Robinson (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), 230-243; E. Schüssler-Fiorenza, "Wisdom Mythology and the Christological Hymns of the New Testament," in *Aspects of Wisdom in Judaism and Early Christianity*, ed. R. Wilken (Notre Dame: Notre Dame University Press, 1975),17-41; Bernhard Lang, *Wisdom and the Book of Proverbs* (New York: The Pilgrim's Press, 1986), 5-7; K.M. O'Conner, "Wisdom Literature and Experience of the Divine," in *Biblical Theology: Problems and Perspectives* (Nashville: 1995), 195; Lang, *Wisdom and the Book of Proverbs*, 76-79, 132-135, 139; H. Gunkel, *Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis des Neuen Testaments* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1903), 26].

2) It has been suggested that Sophia is based upon the example of holy women from Israel [Claudia V. Camp, "Woman Wisdom as Root Metaphor: A Theological Consideration," in *The Listening Heart* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 45-76; cf. Claudia V. Camp, *Wisdom and the feminine in the Book of Proverbs* (Sheffield: Almond, 1985), 215]. 3) She was possibly created as an *ad hoc* rhetorical device representing an attribute of God in order a) to help solve the problem of theodicy [Alice M. Sinnott, *The Personification of Wisdom* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 53-87; Burton L. Mack, *Wisdom and the Hebrew epic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 139-150], b) to provide women a means of participating in the Jewish religion [Martin A. Klopfenstein, "Auferstehung der Göttin in der spätisraelitischen Weisheit von Prov 1-9?," in *Ein Gott allein?*, ed. Walter Dietrich (Fribourg: Fribourg University, 1994), 531-542], c) to concede to common understandings of reproduction and creation [Martin Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992), 47, 77], or d) to criticise the Canaanite religion [R.J. Clifford, "Proverbs IX: A Suggested Ugaritic Parallel," *VT* (1975), 298-306]. 4) Rather than an attribute of God, Von Rad says she represents cosmic order [G. Von Rad, *Wisdom in Israel* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 1972), 144-176; 1974, 130-131].

77 Sinnott, *Wisdom*, 77 (Italics mine). Cf. Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 68. Reese states that Lady *Wisdom* is a personification *and* a mythic figure endowed with features unusual to the personification elsewhere.

78 Schmitt, *Weisheit*, 41.

79 Chrysostome Larcher, *Études sur le Livre de la Sagesse* (Paris: Gabalda, 1969), 409.

80 Dunn, *Christology*, 172-173. He goes so far to say that personification of Sophia is no different from other biblical phrases such as "Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the

Against this, Gottfried Schimanowski concludes that, in the majority of Jewish writings, Sophia is described as clearly distinct from God.[81] So also, Ronald Murphy states: "One can no longer be satisfied with the pale and inert answer that she stands simply for an attribute of God."[82] Likewise, Joseph Reider concludes that Sophia is "repeatedly apotheosized and personified, to the extent of an omnipotent and omniscient intermediary of God."[83] Similarly, Watson holds that Lady Wisdom "is not simply a surrogate for God," since the sage does not identify her with "the God of the Genesis narrative"—nor does the sage present her as "merely a personified human character trait."[84] Instead, she is a distinct hypostasis, a "personal divine power, breathed out by God and pervading the whole world," whose personal agency should not be underestimated.[85] Martin Scott goes so far as to say Sophia in *Wisdom* reaches "the pinnacle of her development," so that she no longer speaks on behalf of God: she is *G*oddess; that is to say, no longer is Lady Wisdom a subordinate to God, nor his consort: she is his replacement in feminine form.[86]

Much of the problem in discerning the identity of Sophia is found in the many images and words the sage borrowed from the surrounding religious thought in order to describe Sophia.[87] "The sage breathes an atmosphere charged with vague and indeterminate conceptions, some Greek and others

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Lord" or "Let your right hand teach you dread deeds!" See also Sinnott, who associates Sophia with other biblical personifications [Sinnott, *Wisdom*, 18-19]. Perhaps even some of the textual variants reveal those who desired to limit Sophia to this interpretation. For example, in Wis. 1.5, the declaration that Sophia is spirit (πνεῦμα σοφία) has been rendered the spirit of *Wisdom* (πνεῦμα σοφίας) in some translations (e.g Itala, Peshitta). Cf. the other textual variant, παιδείας σοφιας.

81 Gottfried Schimanowski, *Weisheit und Messias*, 2nd ed., WUNT (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1985), 105.

82 Ronald E. Murphy, "Hebrew Wisdom," *JAOS* 101, no. 1 (1981), 21-34. (p. 28).

83 Joseph Reider, *The Book of Wisdom* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), 35-36, 52. See also James L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 168; S. Mowinckel, "Hypostasis," in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1928), 2067; and Ernest G. Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 46. Clarke defines Sophia as God's personified agent. Gregg concludes that *Wisdom* is a personification, "almost hypostasised" [J.A.F. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), xxxi].

84 Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 387-388.

85 Ibid., 387: "Like the Pauline 'Holy Spirit', she has her dwelling in the soul or heart of the individual without detriment to her own transcendent identity." See also Lester L. Grabbe, *Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 78.

86 Scott, *Sophia and the Johannine Jesus*, 76-77.

87 See Hadley who argues that the "apparent apotheosis" of Wisdom in Israel is "the gradual eradication (or assimilation into Yahweh) of legitimate goddesses such as Asherah that has prompted a counter-reaction where the feminine needs to be expressed," [Judith M. Hadley, "Wisdom and the goddess," in *Wisdom in ancient Israel: Essays in honour of J.A. Emerton*, ed. John Day (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 243].

Hebrew, which seem to approach one another, but never quite meet."[88] To what degree the sage borrowed from the image of Isis to develop Sophia is difficult to know. [89] Moreover, to conclude how the audiences discerned the borrowed words and images from a real power and to what extent they did so proves a difficult task.

Thus, Dunn concludes that in *Wisdom,* "it remains uncertain whether a conceptually clear definition is ever achieved."[90] Larcher blames the confusion on the term personification, which is used to "évoquer un simple jeu de l'imagination et s'exposer á méconnaître l'effort de pensée déployé par l'auteur."[91] J.A.F. Gregg claims that Sophia in *Wisdom* is neither "God in manifestation" *nor* a "being, personal and distinct from God."[92]

Along similar lines, Martin Hengel states the uncertainty between identifying Lady Wisdom as a personification or power is due to the fact that, for the sage, the concepts are "im Grunde auswechselbar."[93] On the one hand,

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88 Gregg, *Wisdom*, xxxii-xxxiii.

89 The cult of Isis was one of the most popular religions in the Roman world from 4th century BCE to 4th century CE [Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 156]. In this cult, Isis was mistress of fate, associated with the powers of the cosmos. Long life, success, and wealth were her reward. She played a major role in "creating, sustaining and regulating the cosmos," and was the "inventor and patron of maritime trades" the "protector and guide of sailors [J.S. Kloppenborg, "Isis and Sophia in the Book of Wisdom," *HTR* 75 (1982), 68-69]. For a detailed comparison between Isis and Sophia, see James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and Its Consequences* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 46-49 and Burton L. Mack, *Logos und Sophia* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 90-97. For those who argue for the influence of Isis on the personification of Sophia in *Wisdom,* see Kloppenborg, "Isis," 68-69; Wilfred L. Knox, "Divine *Wisdom*," *JTS* 38 (1937), 230-237; Richard Reitzenstein, *Zwei religionsgeschichtliche Fragen nach ungedruckten griechischen Texten der Strassburger Bibliothek* (Strassburg: Trübner, 1901), 104-112; Sinnott, *Wisdom*, 144-151; and Mack, *Logos und Sophia*, 63-72. Contra Paul Heinisch, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1912), xli and Gerhard Pfeifer, *Ursprung und Wesen der Hypostasenvorstellung im Judentum* (Stuggart: Calwer, 1967), 84.

90 Dunn, *Christology*, 168. Similarly, Gregg concludes that despite the fact that Sophia finds her most complete development in the *Wisdom* of Solomon, "Even there the last thing we must look for is a definite, clear cut presentment of *Wisdom*" [Gregg, *Wisdom*, xxxii-xxxiii]. So also Murphy concludes that this question "cannot be effectively answered" and that the "theological baggage these words have acquired over the years is simply too heavy to bear," [Ronald E. Murphy, "The Personification of Wisdom," in *Wisdom in ancient Israel: Essays in honour of J.A. Emerton*, ed. John Day (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1972), 222].

91 Larcher, *Études*, 410. It is not clear how his coined term "personification doctrinale" solves the problem.

92 Gregg, *Wisdom*, xxxvi: Instead, "she emanates from Him, but emanation has not terminated." Therefore, he concludes that *Wisdom* is a personification, "almost hypostasised," [Gregg, *Wisdom*, xxxi]. See also David Winston, "Wisdom in the Wisdom of Solomon," in *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie*, ed. Leo G. Perdue (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1993), 150, 153; Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom*, 168; and Clarke, *Wisdom*, 46. Clarke defines Sophia as God's personified agent.

93 Martin Hengel, *Der Sohn Gottes* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1977), 80-81.

she is the emanation of God's power, but on the other hand, she is presented in a mythological manner as God's "Life-partner" (Lebensgefährtin) and "Throne-mate" (Throngenossin).[94] Therefore, to the question of whether Sophia is a power or personification, perhaps she is "neither one nor the other"[95] but "ready to be either or both as the stress of the argument demands."[96]

Many scholars conclude that the sage uses the personification of Wisdom to bridge the gap between Alexandria and Jerusalem, not fusing the two, but recasting the faith of the latter in light of the philosophy of the former.[97]

As Winston writes:

> In light of the tradition of speculation on Wisdom, with its strong individualistic, humanistic, and universalistic orientation, and above all its linkage of divine revelation with the natural order rather than with Sinai, it is easy to understand why our author chose the figure of Wisdom as the ideal mediator of his message to his contemporaries. She was the perfect bridge between the exclusive nationalist tradition of Israel and the universalistic philosophical tradition that appealed so strongly to the Jewish youth of Roman Alexandria.[98]

Furthermore, according to many scholars, through the presentation of Sophia, the sage appeals to the Jewish youth to take pride in their roots in order to offset the appeal of the Isis cult and the religious milieu in general.[99] For example, Reese deduces that the sage intends "to meet the challenge that Hellenistic religious movements" were offering to the Jews; therefore, with a progressive approach the sage exploits "what is good in paganism for the service of the revealed religion."[100] Now *Wisdom*'s readers can freely participate in Greek culture and still remain faithful to their heritage by integrating the former into latter.[101] The investigations of Sophia have not fully considered her role in light of all the other personifications in the book.

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94 Ibid., 80-81. See also Fichtner, *Weisheit*, 33.

95 Ringgren, *Word*, 119.

96 C.S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 49.

97 Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 89.

98 Winston, "Wisdom," 156. See also Schmitt, *Weisheit*, 9.

99 E.g. "Young Jews, seeking advancement under the Ptolemaic dynasty, might find it hard to resist the attractions of Isis. The personified Wisdom is the answer of orthodox Judaism: the source of order in creation and conduct is not Isis, but the Wisdom of God," [Knox, "Divine *Wisdom*," 236]. See also David Winston, "Wisdom of Solomon," in *ABD*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 126; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 40-48, 148; and Dunn, *Christology*, 170. Cf. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 204.

100 Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 35 (see also pp. 40, 149).

101 Sinnott, *Wisdom*, 150-151, 154. Cf. Mack, *Logos und Sophia*, 34-38, 65-66: "reflective theology—sought to understand Judaism afresh in the midst of hostility, persecution and death."

LOGOS

Especially due to parallels between Philo's Logos and the Logos in *Wisdom*,[102] there is also debate as to whether the Logos in *Wisdom* is an autonomous power or a "purely poetical"[103] device. Most scholars follow Carl Grimm's deduction that the Logos is "eine rhetorisch-dichterische Personification des göttlichen Wollens und Wirkens."[104] For example, Gregg states: the sage "had in mind only the customary Jewish periphrasis for the Lord," and there is no valid reason to believe *Wisdom* regards it as anything else.[105] Following these authors, Winston states that Logos in reality is "God himself in one of his aspects."[106]

Against the idea that Logos is just a rhetorical device, Bogdan Ponizy infers from surrounding literature that if we look at this passage in the context of the Old and New Testaments "using categories introduced by the Greek thought we may say here that Logos is the most mature hypostasis of God."[107] So also Lorenz Dürr says that Logos in *Wisdom* 18, is an "unzweifelhaft persönliche Macht," and the "lebendige machtvolle göttliche Substanz" that "vom Munde der Gottheit ausgeht und in der Welt wirkt."[108] In contrast to both views, Johannes Fichtner concludes that Logos falls between "a personification and a hypostasis" on its way from a rhetorical device to a person.[109]

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102 For a summary of Philo's use of the divine logos, see David T. Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the Timaeus of Plato* (Leiden: Brill, 1986), 446-451, and H. Kleinknecht, "ΛΕΓΩ," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 89.

103 Gregg, *Wisdom*, xxxviii.

104 Carl Ludwig Wilibald Grimm, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1860), 287. See also Michelangelo Priotto, *La Prima Pasqua in Sap 18,5-25* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 1987), 131 and Clarke, *Wisdom*, 121.

105 Gregg, *Wisdom*, xxxix. Similarly, Ernest Clarke concludes that for the Logos, "One can substitute 'God' without altering the meaning of the verse," [Clarke, *Wisdom*, 121]. According to Larcher: "la conception selon laquelle Dieu peut faire périr ou anéantir par une seule parole," [Chrysostome Larcher, *Le Livre de La Sagesse*, 3 vols., vol. 3 (Paris: Gabalda, 1985), 1020]. Therefore, Logos is not a separate being, but a form in which the sage uses his witty imagination in order to demonstrate the divine action in the world (p. 1021).

106 Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 319. So also S. Cheon, *The Exodus Story in the Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 86

107 Bogdan Ponizy, "Logos in the Book of Wisdom 18:14-16," in *"Dort ziehen Schiffe dahin ..."* ed. Matthias Augustin and Klaus-Dietrich Schunck (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996), 175.

108 Lorenz Dürr, *Die Wertung des göttlichen Wortes im Alten Testament und im Antiken Orient* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1938), 125-127: he qualifies, it is a "Hypostase im eigentlichsten Sinne." See also Pfeifer, *Ursprung und Wesen der Hypostasenvorstellung im Judentum*, 44: "Das Wort ist nicht bloß poetisch personifiziert, sondern Hypostase, es steht an Gottes Stelle und handelt an seiner Statt."

109 Fichtner, *Weisheit*, 65. Fichtner argues that Logos is on its way from a personification to the person of Jesus Christ in Rev. 19.11ff. For a similar argument for "the Word" in the fourth gospel and Acts, see André Feuillet, "Témoins oculaires et serviteurs de la Parole (Luc.

Michelangelo Priotto dedicates an entire monograph to the topic of Logos in Wis. 18.5-25, especially in light of the Passover.[110] He deduces that although the personification of Logos includes poetical language, such language serves a greater purpose than decoration; rather, it reveals a profound thought about the tenth plague. Although the sage anchors this thought in tradition, he preserves his own original thought, namely, that God destroys the first-born of Egypt by his word. Priotto admits that such an idea is the fruit of theological reflection already begun, but he insists this reflection finds its clear and remarkable development in *Wisdom*.[111]

Consequently, the sage's presentation encourages the Alexandrian Jews to find their identity in the living word of God as well as to understand the first Passover as an allusion to the future judgment of the Lord. The destruction of the wicked by Logos parallels the eschatological destruction of the ungodly by Creation in *Wisdom* 5, and thus serves as a "prefiguration" of the final judgment. Priotto infers that such an interpretation would console the persecuted community as well as provide an incentive for them to choose to remain faithful to the Jewish faith in the face of danger.[112]

We shall see that although scholars do compare Logos with Creation and Sophia, they do not compare Logos with the other personifications in *Wisdom*. Having now considered these discussions about the nature of personification in *Wisdom*, we shall now present those on the nature of Sin in Romans.

2.2 The Personification of Sin in Romans

As with the personifications in *Wisdom*, most of the work on personified Sin in Romans concerns whether one should define personified ***s***in in an anthropological sense, that which people do, or ***S***in in a mythological sense, under whom people are enslaved. This has been a matter of great debate, much of which follows the disagreement between Rudolf Bultmann and his student, Ernst Käsemann.[113] Denying a "realistic mythology," Bultmann proclaims that

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1.2b)," *NT* 15 (1973), 241-259. Larcher compares Logos with the Angel of the Lord, who in the OT seems to be God himself and at others a distinct being [Larcher, *Sagesse*, 1019].

110 Priotto, *Pasqua*, 1-169.

111 Ibid.

112 Ibid.

113 Cf. Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, English Translation ed. (London: SCM Press, 1980), 150. For a detailed discussion of the Bultmann-Käsemann debate, see Martinus C. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 15-37; and for a summary of it, see L.J. Kreitzer, "Eschatology," in *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press, 1993), 254. We are only going to discuss the identity of sin *in Romans*; however, the discussion of the nature of these personifications goes beyond Romans; e.g. O. Pfleiderer, *Primitive Christianity*, vol. I (Clifton: Reference Book, 1965), 69, 218, 289-290;

sin "came into the world by sinning."[114] Bultmann does admit that Paul speaks of sin as a personal being as if it were a demonic ruler.[115] Bultmann says: it is clear that Paul's language "stamps *flesh and sin as powers to which man has fallen victim* and against which he is powerless."[116] He insists, however, that Paul goes no further than this; such language, in the end, serves only as a figure of speech[117] to help the audience better understand themselves and the world within which they live.[118]

Many others generally follow Bultmann's conclusion. For example, C.K. Barrett says that sin only represents an "inward disposition of rebellion against God."[119] Similarly, Bruce Kaye goes so far as to say that Paul always understands sin as the power of human emotions and lusts.[120] Günter Röhser even devotes an entire monograph to challenge the "unbestimmten Gefühl" in which scholars refer to the personification of sin as an evil power. He disputes the identification of Sin as an external demonic power as popularised by Käsemann[121] and insists that Paul's personification of sin as an "unheilvolles und todbringendes lebendiges Wesen" really points to sin as "den Inbegriff menschlicher Tatverfehlungen."[122]

Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), 134-135; and Richard B. Hays, *First Corinthians* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1997), 277.

114 Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Kendrick Grobel, vol. II (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), 251.

115 Ibid., 244-245, 251.

116 Ibid., 245 (emphasis Bultmann's).

117 Ibid. Cf. de Boer's argument against rejecting a mythological reading of Death in 1 Cor. 15.26 [de Boer, *Death*, 139].

118 R. Bultmann, "The New Testament and Mythology," in *Kerygma and Myth*, ed. H.W. Bartsch (London: SCM, 1972),154.

119 C.K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 112 (see also p. 147).

120 Bruce N. Kaye, *The Thought Structure of Romans with Special Reference to Chapter 6* (Austin, TX: Scholar's Press, 1979), 39-57.

121 See Günter Röhser, *Metaphorik und Personifikation der Sünde* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1987), 1, 179.

122 Ibid., 177.

In contrast, Käsemann concludes:

> Man for Paul is never just on his own. He is always a specific piece of world and therefore becomes what in the last resort he is by determination from outside, i.e. by the power which takes possession of him and the lordship to which he surrenders himself. His life is from the beginning a stake in the confrontation between God and the principalities of this world.[123]

Whereas Käsemann challenges Bultmann's thesis, Helmut Umbach argues against Röhser's. Umbach questions Röhser's logic of interpreting Rom. 5.12 from Rom. 3.9, so that Röhser can then define the rest of Paul's references to sin in light of one verse. Umbach also challenges the validity of Röhser's strategy of reading Paul's usages of sin in other letters (written to different contexts) back into Romans. Moreover, according to Umbach, to say that Paul always means human failure and never a demonic power is to neglect the literature surrounding Paul.[124] Thus, Umbach insists that the personification of Sin should *not* be interpreted only as a picture or metaphor, but as a reality as well.[125] It is "eine Macht, der der Mensch 'in Adam' total unterworfen ist...ja, ihn regelrecht 'besessen' hat."[126]

Many other scholars endorse the same conclusion. For example, Bruce Longenecker states that Paul often "evidences the view that people's lives are caught up in a matrix of spiritual forces of one kind or another." Longenecker cites the Spirit, Righteousness, and Grace as forces for good and the powers of Sin and Death as those for ill.[127] Moreover, Robert Jewett infers that Sin and Death are "cosmic forces under which all humans are in bondage" and that any attempt to identify them as otherwise does not do justice to Paul's "apocalyptic worldview."[128]

Similarly, Beverly Gaventa states that Sin is a "cosmic terrorist." That is to say, rather than "a lower-case transgression," it is "an upper-case Power," enslaving humanity and fighting against God.[129] Similarly, Otto Kuss holds

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123 Ernst Käsemann, *New Testament Questions of Today* (London: SCM Press, 1969), 136.

124 I.e. the Apocrypha, Pseudepigrapha and Rabbinic writings.

125 "Für Paulus dürfte sie nicht nur 'Bild' oder 'Metapher' sein, sondern 'Wirklichkeit' benennen." [Helmut Umbach, *In Christus getauft---von der Sünde befreit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 55-56].

126 Ibid., 314. See also Neil Elliot, *Rhetoric of Romans* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 251.

127 Longenecker, *Triumph*, 26.

128 Jewett also argues in light of the definite articles before the nouns—Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 374. Similarly, Andrew Das sees Sin and Law in Romans as "personified, apocalyptic powers" that dominate and enslave humanity [A. Andrew Das, *Paul, the Law, and the Covenant* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2001), 223].

129 B.R. Gaventa, "The Cosmic Power of Sin in Paul's Letter to the Romans: Toward a Widescreen Edition," *Interpretation*, no. July (2004), 231, 235. Moo mentions a similar but milder conclusion in a footnote: "sin is more than an individual sin;" it is a pervasive power that holds sway in the world—" the bridgehead that paves the way for 'sinning' as a condition of humanity," [Moo, *Romans*, 319fn].

that Sin is more than the sin of Adam; it is also Sin as a "fortlaufend wirksame Unheilsmacht."[130] Matthew Black goes so far to say personified Sin should be thought of as corresponding to the snake in Genesis, which has a Satanic character.[131] Black's interpretation is not too far from Sanday and Headlam who also see a connexion between Satan and personified Sin.[132]

T.L. Carter takes issue with Röhser and Umbach both for limiting sin to one interpretation ("the context determines the identity")[133] and for not investigating the personification from a sociological standpoint.[134] Therefore, Carter employs a modified version of the model developed by Mary Douglas. From this model, Carter proposes that in Romans, Paul presents Sin as a power to address racial tensions and hence demolish boundaries between Jew and Gentile. Carter sees in the "symbolism of the power of sin" the attempt by the apostle "to demolish Jewish confidence in the function of the law as a boundary marker" and thus "to legitimate the position of law-free Gentile believers."[135] While this may be one piece of an overall purpose, the immediate context of personified Sin, as we shall show, is not directly dealing with racial tension but with the origin of evil over against the work of God in Christ.

In sum, so far we have observed that those who have compared *Wisdom* and Romans have not taken into account their use of personification. Furthermore, despite the research on personification in both *Wisdom* and Romans (to our knowledge), no one has investigated an individual personification with respect to its relationship with all of the personifications in the work. We have also shown that most of this research on personification focuses on the personifications in relation to their nature as a rhetorical device or a power.[136] Within each of these discussions, scholars have reached a

130 Otto Kuss, *Der Römerbrief* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1963), 226.

131 Matthew Black, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), 102, 104. So also Michael Theobald, *Römerbrief Kapitel 1-11* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk GmbH, 2002), 209; and Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, vol. 2 (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), 83.

132 Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, 145-146. However, they conclude that whether sin is considered personal or impersonal cannot be discerned from these passages alone.

133 T.L. Carter, *Paul and the Power of Sin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 2.

134 Ibid., 3-4.

135 Ibid., 203.

136 When deciding whether a certain term is used as a rhetorical device or as a power, it is difficult to make this distinction, which presumes such a distinction existed in the mind of the original author. Can scholars say with confidence that an author thought far enough through an expression to understand it either as a rhetorical device, a power, or a rhetorical device representing a power? And what of consistency? If one believes that Logos is a mere rhetorical device in *Wisdom*, does this mean that Death is as well? If one concludes Sin in Romans is a suprahuman force, does that mean Grace is also a cosmic power? For example, according to Das, Grace is a cosmic power [Das, *Paul, the Law, and the Covenant*, 223]. In contrast, Stephen Westerholm concludes just the opposite, since Grace is only a

stalemate with no immediate solution in sight.[137] Therefore, we hope to push beyond the debate of the nature of personifications by evaluating the evidence in a different light—that of its purpose within the overall use of personification in the work to which it belongs.

We shall now conclude with comments about our approach, where we shall define heuristic comparison and emphasise our goal to understand both *Wisdom* and Romans better, rather than only investigating one work for the sake of the other.

III. Approach

While a comparative study can help us understand both *Wisdom* and Romans better, E.P. Sanders has revealed the danger in comparative investigations. Whether a scholar seeks to capture the essence of two distinctive religions or the motifs of religions, the scholar is in danger of misrepresenting that religion due to 1) over-simplifying by reductionism, 2) over-emphasising one to the

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personification, he claims that Sin must also be [Stephen Westerholm, "Paul's Anthropological 'Pessimism' in its Jewish Context," in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and his Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 79].

137 Hans Helander addresses the difficulty of ascertaining the extent to which people perceived a deity as real since "as is natural in religious matters, people's views were presumably extremely vague and inarticulate," [Hans Helander, *The Noun victoria as Subject* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1982), 20-21]. According to Coleridge, "Of a people who raised altars to fever, to sport, to fright, etc., it is impossible to determine how far they meant a personal power or a personification of a power," [Samuel Coleridge in Thomas Middleton Raysor, ed., *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism* (London: Constable & Co, 1936), 30]. Likewise, Lewis reasons that while the ancients worshipped "things that seem to us to be mere abstractions," those "names which seem to us to be the names of concrete deities can be used in contexts where we can only use an abstract noun," [Lewis, *Allegory*, 48]. "Taking these two facts together, we are forced to the conclusion that a distinction which is fundamental to us—the distinction, namely between an abstract universal and a living spirit—was only vaguely and intermittently present to the Roman mind," [Ibid.]. See also Stephen A. Barney, *Allegories of History, Allegories of Love* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1979), 38; W. O. E. Oesterley, *An introduction to the books of the Apocrypha* (London: SPCK, 1953), 53; and Ringgren, *Word*, 154-155.

It is even more difficult to discern how an audience would have perceived the expressions, even if all in the audience shared the same perception. As an explanation, Helander points to the evolution of thought affected by "political propaganda" and "energetic exploitation"; consequently, people's views on the matter certainly would have varied, "not only during different periods but also with their education, general religious and philosophical opinions and social position," [Helander, *Victoria*, 21]. Cf. Murphy, "The Personification of Wisdom," 222-223.

detriment of the other, or 3) ignoring the different functions in the respective works.[138]

In acknowledgment of these inherent dangers, this research will seek to treat *Wisdom* and Romans equally while avoiding any reductionism of thought or function which violates the overall integrity of the respective works. For this reason, we shall first investigate each work in its own right and delay any comparison until the final section. Furthermore, rather than to make general conclusions or caricatures of whole religions (to which Sanders's warning is directed), the goal of this work is to compare the authors' use of literary figures and discuss their significance.

In short, our literary analysis will involve a heuristic comparison. To borrow from Philip Alexander's definition: a heuristic comparison "is intended to sharpen our understanding of what each text is saying, whether in agreement or disagreement."[139] That is to say, in our current enterprise, we are looking at the personifications in *Wisdom* for the sake of understanding the personifications in Romans *as well as* looking at those in Romans for the sake of understanding those in *Wisdom*. Moreover, a heuristic comparison "is not meant to establish literary dependence," although it does not conclude that one does not exist.

According to Alexander,

> Since the comparison is heuristic, differences of date, place, tradition, literary genre and language are immaterial…what we are comparing and contrasting are ideas circling round a common idea.[140]

However, at this point our comparison diverges from Alexander's. Differences of date, place, tradition, genre and language *can* help us understand these ideas circling around the use of personification, as well as help provide us an account of similarities and differences. For example, the mutual utilisation of the Pentateuch by the sage and Paul could cause some of their ideas to converge. However, different situations and experiences (e.g. a philosophical influence for the sage or the Christian gospel for Paul) could cause them to interpret the Pentateuch in different ways. Therefore, we shall make note of them at relevant points.

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138 E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 12-24. Beverly Gaventa argues that many scholars, who have compared Paul and *Wisdom*, possessed a pre-disposed Christian bias that set up an unfair treatment of *Wisdom* [Gaventa, "Rhetoric," 129]. According to her, their predisposition of Paul's superiority over *Wisdom* forced the conclusion before the research ever begun that the apostle's work either surpassed or corrected *Wisdom*. "For Christian scholars, Paul was the standard against which *Wisdom* was assessed" (p. 139).

139 Philip Alexander, "The Qumran *Songs of the Sabbath Sacrifice* and the *Celestial Hierarchy* of Dionysius the Areopagite: A Comparative Approach," (University of Manchester, 2006).

140 Ibid.

We should also define and discuss our approach to personification. In chapters 1-2, we shall define personification and discuss proposed purposes for personification from the ancient world to today. Once this has been done, in section II (chapters 3-7) we shall investigate the use of personification in *Wisdom,* and in section III (chapters 8-11) those in Romans. The research in sections II and III will provide the foundation needed in the final section (chapters 12-14) to make comparisons and conclusions about the contexts and purposes of the personifications. Throughout these sections, we shall provide the Greek text and our translations of the relevant passages.[141]

141 The exception will be in chapter 7, where for the sake of brevity we shall survey *Wisdom* 6-11 rather than translating these chapters. Further, all translations of other works in this thesis are ours, unless stated otherwise.

Chapter 1

Definitions and Specifications for Personification

Introduction

R. Dean Anderson, Jr. states: "Those all too familiar with the text of the NT are inclined to miss the striking vividness of Paul's personification of abstract concepts."[1] This is true for other biblical personifications as well. Anderson gives no instruction, however, about how one should recognise biblical personifications, nor how to deal with them once notice has been taken. Grasping personifications is not as easy as one might assume. This is especially the case when we refer to personification without defining what we mean by personification; when we employ "half-abstract, half-concrete terms"[2] such as a "quasi-personification"[3] or "wirklich halb persönliche Macht";[4] or when we fail to specify the difference between "almost personified"[5] and fully so.

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1 R. Dean Anderson Jr., *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul* (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 156.

2 "Nothing is more inadequate and disgusting than the attempt to translate the concrete symbols of the Bible into less concrete and less powerful symbols. Theology should not weaken the concrete symbols, but it must analyze them and interpret them in abstract ontological terms. Nothing is more inadequate or confusing than the attempt to restrict theological work to half-abstract, half-concrete terms which do justice neither to existential intuition nor to cognitive analysis," [Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 2 ed., vol. 1 (London: SCM Press, 1978), 242-243].

3 E.g. Morton W. Bloomfield, "A Grammatical Approach to Personification Allegory," *Modern Philology* 60, no. 3 (1963), 164. See also Helmer Ringgren, *Word and Wisdom* (Lund: Hakan Ohlssons Boktryckeri, 1947), 8. Cf. Hans Dieter Betz, *Galatians*, Hermeneia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 143 fn. 42]. Would Cicero respond to our terminology in the same way he responds to the Epicurean platitude "*quasi corpus*": "I am sure I do not know what that means, and the fact is, neither do you—you just refuse to admit it" (*De Natura Deorum,* I.71)?

4 Rudolf Bultmann, *Der Stil der paulinischen Predigt und die kynisch-stoische Diatribe*, 2nd ed. (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1984), 87.

5 E.g. James L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 74; Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, vol. 1 (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), 172-173; and J.A.F. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), xxxi.

Furthermore, scholars also employ personification with different meanings. Sometimes the word personification is used to refer to a power, while at other times it is used to refer to a rhetorical device. For example, Robert Jewett identifies sin in Rom. 5.12 as a cosmic force and insists it is *not* a personification,[6] while Sanday and Headlam insist Sin is indeed a personification *and* "a malignant force let loose among mankind."[7] Confusion surrounds the terms—for while a personification and a power can be separated, they do not have to be. For instance, Alice Sinnott concludes that rather than a person, or hypostasis, Lady Wisdom is a personification.[8] However, could not Wisdom be a personification of a person or a power? And is not a hypostasis a type of personification? Adding to the confusion are the numerous nouns used to refer to personification. As we shall see below, due to an overlap of definitions, authors use various terms as synonyms for personification without any specification.[9] To be fair, such confusion in terms is not new but dates back to the ancient world.[10]

To move beyond this confusion and to understand personification we have two tasks at hand: to realise that the expression is a personification, and to figure out the purpose of the expression. The former accomplishment induces one to undertake the latter.[11] In order to know what qualifies as a personification, it is necessary to define personification. What is needed, then, is both a clear and unifying definition for personification— this is necessary not only for *Wisdom* and Romans, but also for all discussions of personification in biblical scholarship. However, while scholars make conclusions about personifications, to our knowledge, no such definition exists among biblical scholars.[12] Furthermore, scholars have focused more on the nature of personifications and therefore have tended to pass over both ancient and modern purposes given for the use of personification.[13]

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6 Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 374.

7 William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *The Epistle to the Romans*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1895), 145-146. Similarly, Andrew Das recently concluded, "Paul introduces *personified*, apocalyptic forces," [A. Andrew Das, *Paul, the Law, and the Covenant* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2001), 223. (Italics mine)].

8 Alice M. Sinnott, *The Personification of Wisdom* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 18.

9 E.g. metaphor, allegory, anthropomorphism and hypostasis.

10 For example, Theon used the term *prosopopoiia* to refer to the general practice of giving voice to someone or something, while Aphthonius used it more specifically to mean the personification of a mythological character [George Kennedy, *A New History of Classical Rhetoric* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 206].

11 Ted Cohen, "Metaphor and the Cultivation of Intimacy," On Metaphor, ed. Ed Sheldon Sacks, 6.

12 Although Röhser proposes a clear definition, for whatever reason, biblical scholars have been slow to apply it to their works. See Günter Röhser, *Metaphorik und Personifikation der Sünde* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1987), 134-135.

13 Such preoccupation with nature rather than purpose also characterised the ancient world [Anderson Jr., *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul*, 107].

The goal of this section then is to present, as clearly as possible, a definition of personification and a survey of the purposes for personification in order to provide more legitimate grounds for examining the personifications in *Wisdom* and Romans, as well as other crucial personifications from biblical and classical sources. Therefore, in this chapter, we shall discuss definitions and specifications of personification so as not to be confused with other tropes. In the next chapter, we shall concentrate on the second goal and provide a survey of the proposed purposes for personification from the ancient world to today, which we can then apply to *Wisdom* and Romans (Sections II-III).

Definitions and Specifications

Rhetoric, according to Aristotle, is related to dialectic.[14] It is a tool which persons of truth are obligated to use; the goal of this tool, according to his teacher,[15] is persuasion in the soul.[16] Briefly, one aspect of rhetoric is style,[17] which includes ornamentation; and one avenue for ornamentation is the use of tropes. Metaphor is a trope, and personification is a metaphor.[18]

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14 Aristotle presents rhetoric as an offshoot of dialectic; it is a mere faculty for furnishing arguments (*Rhetoric* I.II.7). In I.I.1, he states that rhetoric is the ἀντιστροφός of dialectic. For an exhaustive history of dialectic and rhetoric see George Kennedy, *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), 1-18.

15 I.e. Plato.

16 Plato, *Phaedrus*, 265d1ff. For Plato, however, rhetoric was inferior to dialectic: the true philosopher could persuade without rhetoric (see *Phaedrus* 267a-b, 271c; *Gorgias* 449a-458c). So also Cicero, *De Oratore* 3.53.205, where he warns against using metaphor to enliven a discourse. Cf. Dio Chrysostom, who likens orators and their rhetoric to a peacock who struts in pride as he parades his plumage to impress onlookers in contrast to the owl before whom all the birds alight in order to hear her voice of wisdom (*The Olympic Discourse*, XII.1-6). Conversely, Demetrius warns against language without style, since plain language may be despised 'just as a man stripped of his clothing' (*On Style,* II.100). According to Ricoeur, rhetoric is the "oldest enemy" to dialectic because it has the tendency to focus more on how something is spoken rather than the truth which should be spoken [Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, trans. Robert Czerny (London: Routledge, 2006), 10]. Such a negative opinion of figures of speech in rhetoric continue today; see for example, John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. John W. Yolton, vol. 2 (London: Dent, 1690; reprint, 1961), (Bk 3 chp 10 pp. 105-106 and Paul de Man, The Epistemology of Metaphor, On Metaphor Ed. Sheldon Sacks pp 11-28 (14)].

17 Quintilian gives five aspects of rhetoric: invention, elocution (style), disposition, memory and delivery (*Inst*. III.8.7).

18 Quintilian makes a distinction between tropes and figures; he includes personification in the latter. He admits, however, that such a distinction is very hard to make in light of their resemblance in meaning and of their identical purpose—*Inst.* III.9.1-3. Cf. Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, trans. Robert Czerny (London: Routledge, 1997), 59-60.

Although an endless battle has raged over the genera, species, number and classification of tropes,[19] we shall seek to avoid much of the confusion by discussing and defining only those necessary for our goal—the understanding of personification. Again, it is necessary for us to make these distinctions, so that we know what specifically qualifies as personification and what generally does not.

In *Pauly's Real-Encyclopädie*, it is said of personification:

> Von Personifikationen kann gesprochen werden, wenn einem Unpersönlichen, also Seelenlosen, die Merkmale der Persönlichkeit verliehen, ihm Eigenschaften, Gedanken, Gefühle, Bestrebungen, Handlungen ausgeschrieben werden, die sonst nur beseeler Persönlichkeit—menschlicher oder göttlicher—zukommen.[20]

More simply put, we shall define personification as *the attribution of human characteristics to any inanimate object, abstract concept or impersonal being.* According to Emma Stafford, a personification can be as simple as a catachresis (the mouth of a river),[21] as complex as an idea that has been deified to the point of receiving the kind of cult associated with the Olympian gods (e.g. the goddess Ate), or as rhetorical devices on the spectrum between these two extremes.[22]

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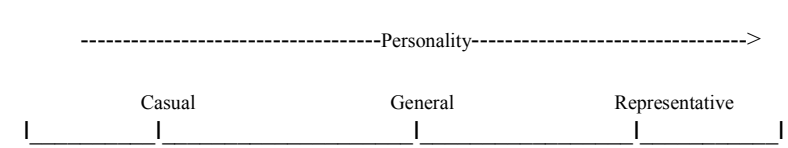
19 For a discussion of this debate, see Quintilian, *Inst.* III.8.6.1-2.

20 Wilhelm Kroll, ed., *Pauly's Real-Encyclopädie*, 19th ed., vol. Pech bis Philon (1937), 1043. Cf. also Waltraud Guglielmi, "Personifikation," in *Lexicon der Ägyptologie*, ed. Wolfgang Helck (Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1982), 978-979: "Mit dem Begriff Personifikation bezeichnet man die Auffassung abstrakter Begriffe oder lebloser Dinge als Person mit den Qualitäten: physisches Leben und Bewegung, mentale Kräfte und Gefühle und/oder Erscheinung als Mann oder Frau." Similarly, Pierre Fontanier states "La personnification consiste à faire d'une être inanimé, insensible, ou d'une être abstrait et purement idéal, une espèce d'être réel et physique, doué de sentiment et de vie, enfin ce qu'on appelle une personne; et cela, par simple façon de parler, ou par une fiction toute verbale, s'il faut le dire. Elle a lieu par métonymie, par synecdoque, ou par métaphore," [Pierre Fontanier, *Les Figures du Discours* (Paris: Flammarion, 1988), 111]. Cf. Lausberg's definition: "attributer à une chose inanimée les sentiments, le langage, etc. d'une personne," [Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, trans. Matthew T. Bliss et. al. (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 895]. Later, Lausberg defines *fictio personae*: "the introduction of non-personal things as persons capable of speech and other forms of personified behavior," (pp. 369-370). Cf. also Rodney Stenning Edgecombe, "Ways of Personifying," *Style* 31, no. 1 (1997), 1-13.

21 Cf. Fontanier, *Les Figures du Discours*, 213-219.

22 Stafford, *Personification in the Greek World*, xix. For examples of different scales of personification, see Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Dublin: Messrs. Whitestone, 1783), 386; Konrat Ziegler and Walther Sontheimer, eds., *Der Kleine Pauly*, 4th ed. (München: Alfred Druckenmüller Verlag, 1972), 1042-1046; Jaroslav Cerny, *Ancient Egyptian Religion*, 2nd ed. (London: Hutchinson, 1957), 58; Guglielmi, "Personifikation," 979; Siegfried Morenz, *Ägyptische Religion*, 2nd ed. (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1977), 30-31; John Baines, *Fecundity Figures* (Chicago: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 1985), 15, 19-30 and Bertrand H. Bronson, "Personification Reconsidered," in *New Light on Dr. Johnson* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959), 199-201.

We shall now outline our version of such a scale, which should *not* be seen as hard and fast. Instead, its points are elastic, its boundaries fluid intending to serve only as a tool to help conceptualise and understand personification.[23]



On one side of a scale, there is the personification with "scarcely any personality at all."[24] We refer to these as casual personifications. They are similar to the dead metaphor[25] in that they are so commonly used that the comparison is no longer realised; they are "forgotten but not obliterated."[26] A couple of examples are "dancing daffodils" or time who "marches on."[27] So common are these personifications, few actually picture flowers in a waltz or clocks in cadence.

In fact, due to scholars' familiarity with biblical texts, this is the category in which many biblical personifications now fall. However, these very same personifications that pass by the modern audience with little notice might have deeply stirred the imagination of the original audiences—personifications like Righteousness who kisses Peace (Ps 85.10); Pestilence who marches before the Lord and Plague who follows close behind (Hab. 3.5); Justice who presumably punishes Paul (Acts 28.4); [28] and Desire who gives birth to Sin (Jam. 1.15).[29]

Moving toward more personality, the next category on the scale is the general personification. This personification speaks of an inanimate object, abstract concept, or impersonal being *in comparison* to a person. Wordsworth's phrase, "The river glideth at his own sweet will," is an example of a general personification. Another example is: "Rejoicing, the Sun races to the finish line."[30] In the former, the river is compared to a person taking a stroll; in the latter, the Sun is compared to an athlete in a race. In both cases it

23 Cf. David H. Aaron, *Biblical Ambiguities* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 29.

24 Emma Stafford, *Worshipping Virtues. Personification and the divine in ancient Greece.* (London: Duckworth, 2000), 2. Cf. Harold L. Axtell, *The Deification of Abstract Ideas in Roman Literature and Inscriptions* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1907), 86.

25 For more on dead metaphor see Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (London: Clarendon Press, 1985), 71-83 and Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 72.

26 Bronson, "Personification Reconsidered," 196.

27 Cf. Bloomfield, "Grammatical Approach," 164, where he gives the example of calling a ship "she."

28 As opposed to the NASB and NRSV, the NIV stresses the personification by capitalising Justice (Dike).

29 For other biblical personifications we may often miss, see Ringgren, *Word*, 149-164.

30 Cf. Ps. 19.5.

is likely that the author or reader does not believe another person or power lies behind the personification. The river is not really an old man, nor is the Sun an actual athlete. Furthermore, in these cases, neither represents a god. Rather, the river only represents the river and the Sun stands for itself. This category is better understood in contrast to the next category, the representative personification.

Here, the personification actually represents someone else. Rather than serving as a mere comparison to a person, this personification actually represents an attribute, passion or part of a person or suprahuman power and is ontologically the same as or part of that being. The personification, then, takes on even more personality, the personality of the being it represents.[31] Most often these personifications take the form of a being's vices, virtues or desires. A representative personification can stand for a human. For instance, Cicero claims that the noun in the phrase "wit has prevailed" actually represents Odysseus in his triumph over Cyclops.[32] A representative personification can also stand for human desires. For example in *Confessions,* the "vanities of vanities" grab St. Augustine to whisper in his ear, "Do you really believe you can part with us?"[33] These vanities stand for Augustine's own reluctant passions to depart from his former trifles.

Finally, a representative personification can also stand for a suprahuman power. For example, Cicero insists that the personifications Providence, Faith, and Virtue, in reality, only represent attributes of the gods.[34] In contrast to the general personification, if we return to our example of the personified sun, within this category, if the Sun races across the sky, it might actually represent the god Helios with his fiery chariot.

To review, a casual personification is that which has become merely a figure of speech so that most do not even realise the human traits attributed to it. Next on the scale is the general personification which, despite having recognised human traits, is not thought actually to represent a real person: it only stands in comparison to one. In contrast, the representative personification is conceived to stand for another person or power and highlights an attribute, emotion, or part of that being.

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31 We shall include metonymy, synecdoche, and ellipsis within this category, except when they are casual expressions.

32 Cicero, *De Oratore,* III.vlii.167. See also Philo, *Det.* 59.

33 Augustine, *Confessions*, VIII.10.

34 Cicero, *De Natura Deorum,* II.29; II.61. Cf. Whitman's discussion of Achilles' anger (Iliad I, 188-224), J. Whitman, *Allegory: The Dynamics of an Ancient and Medieval Technique* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 20. Sometimes a personification can also represent another general object. See for example, the personification of Lady Wisdom in Baruch 4.1 where the personification does not represent God, but the book of Torah. In this case, the personification falls closer to the general personification on the scale.

Even with this definition and these qualifications, it is not always easy to distinguish whether or not a personification occurs. This is especially the case in short passages[35] and brief statements[36] where the personification is not certain. To avoid debatable personifications as much as possible, we shall focus primarily on those which are an object, concept or impersonal being that, as the subject of the sentence, takes a verb usually associated with human action.[37] Therefore, the personifications we will discuss shall be at least general or representative.

As mentioned above, it is also difficult to distinguish whether a personification occurs or not when other tropes such as metaphor, allegory, anthropomorphism, and *prosopopoiia* are confused with personification. This confusion occurs due to an overlap in definitions. For instance, a metaphor can consist of a personification, and an allegory is an extended metaphor. We shall now specify these terms in relation to our definition of personification.

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35 For instance, Morton Bloomfield cites a partial reference from *Canterbury Tales* to demonstrate the difficulty of simple identification: "Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote." One might think the personal pronoun "his" proves the personification; however, during Chaucer's time "his" could be used to refer to masculine or neuter nouns. If one reads on, however, the reader can conclude Aprill seems more likely to be personified in light of the personification of Zephirus:

> Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote
> The droghte of March hath perced to the roote…
>
> When Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
> Inspired hath in every holt and heath
> The tendre croppes.

Bloomfield argues that the following lines clearly portray a true personification making the possible personification of Aprill dubious. It seems, rather, that the following personifications reinforce rather than undercut Aprill and *his* soothing showers. Furthermore, according to Bloomfield, once the personification is extended "over any considerable length, the grammatical evidence becomes overwhelming," [Bloomfield, "Grammatical Approach," 163-164]. Although we shall not go as far to say overwhelming, it is often evident.

36 E.g. "A body subject to (s)in" (Wis. 1.4b) or "All are under (s)in," (Rom. 3.9).

37 Cf. Röhser, *Metaphorik*, 134-135. Röhser restricts personification to that which has "konkrete Gegenstände, Naturkräfte, oder Abstraktnomina." Rohser, however, makes too much of the principle that personifications should speak. He bases most of this on Cicero. Yet, even Cicero uses personifications which do not speak. For example, Cicero states that "Luxury has forced an entry; avarice has found a way, loyalty has prevailed" (*De Oratore* 3.42.168) and that "Nomoi stretch out their hand to provide the Senate a sword" (*Pro Milone*, III.8-9). All of this, however, is to assume that Paul actually knew of Cicero and was committed to following his rules as well as presuming that Cicero himself did not admit exceptions that prove his rules. There is a long tradition of personification in both Jewish and Greco-Roman sources that precede Cicero and Paul definitely seems to draw from the former, those considered scripture. For more on this see the section on *prosopopoiia* below. Cf. also Bloomfield, "Grammatical Approach," 163. Bloomfield gives three grammatical tests for true personification: 1) the use of nouns as names of living beings or gods, 2) verbs which are normally only used of living creatures and 3) the use of the vocative, which is often decisive. Sometimes a general object or abstract concept can be used with action verbs not peculiar to humanity; for example, one can say that a wind "howls" or a stomach "growls." We shall refer to such cases as *actualisation* rather than personification.

Metaphor: The most beautiful trope

Metaphor, 'the most common and beautiful of tropes,'[38] has been defined by Janet Martin Soskice as "that figure of speech whereby we speak about one thing in terms which are seen to be suggestive of another."[39] As one example, Soskice quotes a personification by Emily Dickinson: "A Narrow Wind complains all Day." Aristotle also presents a personification as his first example of metaphor: "but my ship stands right here."[40] A wind, however, narrow or not, does not literally complain; nor does a ship stand like a man: thus, they are personified.[41] Of course, Soskice and Aristotle are still correct, since a personification is indeed a type of metaphor.

The difference, however, is that a metaphor presents a person in relationship to another character, object or event, while a personification *is* another character, object or event.[42] For instance, the phrase, "King Richard is a lion, roaring before his pride," is a metaphor, while "The lion reached for his sword, calling forth his crusaders," is more specifically a personification (see representative personification above).[43] In short, while a personification is always a metaphor, the reverse is not the case.

Allegory: A metaphor gone too far

An allegory is a type of extended metaphor—"one gone too far" according to Quintilian.[44] To define allegory, Jon Whitman personifies it: allegory "turns its

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38 Quintillian, *Inst.* 8.6.4.

39 Soskice, *Metaphor*, 15.

40 νηῦς δέ μοι ἥδ' ἕστηκεν (*Poetics* XXI.8). Aristotle does make a distinction in *Rhetoric* III.XI.3; there, he offers Homer as an example of one who often uses metaphor to speak of the lifeless (τω ἄψυχα) as having life (ἔμψυχα). In fact, Aristotle attributes Homer's popularity to this practice and cites as support a series of personifications from the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*. In *Rhetoric* III.XI.1, Aristotle refers to personification as "to put before the eyes" (πρὸ ὀμμάτων ποιεῖν).

41 It is possible that Aristotle did not mean standing as a person. In such case, this would be an actualisation rather than a personification. See also Quintilian (*Inst.* 8.6.44) as he cites Horace's personification of a ship that represents the civil state (*Carmina*, 1.14).

42 See Stephen A. Barney, *Allegories of History, Allegories of Love* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1979), 28.

43 The relationship between metaphor and personification is so close Lausberg has a classification reserved for a "personifying metaphor," [Lausberg, *Handbook*, 372]. For more on the "blood kinship" of metaphor and personification, see Bronson, "Personification Reconsidered," 194-196.

44 Many definitions of metaphor and allegory are very close. For example, compare Soskice's definition above with Quintilian's definition of allegory—'the representation of one thing by its words and of another thing by its sense' (Quintilian, *Inst.* 8.6.14).

head in one direction, but turns its eyes in another."[45] It says one thing, but means another.[46] Samuel Taylor Coleridge provides a more in depth definition of allegory:

> We may safely define allegorical writing as the employment of one set of agents and images with actions and accompaniments correspondent, so as to convey, while in disguise, either moral qualities or conceptions of the mind that are not in themselves objects of the senses, or other images, agents, actions, fortunes, and circumstances, so that the difference is everywhere presented to the eye or imagination while the likeness is suggested to the mind; and this connectedly so that the parts combine to form a consistent whole.[47]

It is here that one might get allegory and personification confused.[48] Just as a metaphor may consist of an allegory, so also an allegory may consist of other metaphors and personifications. Whereas allegory has been defined as "a metaphor sustained for the length of a whole sentence and beyond,"[49] at times it could also be defined as multiple personifications sustained for a paragraph and beyond.[50]

An example of allegory is Jotham's personification of the trees, the grapevine and the bramble (Judg. 9.7-15). However, an allegory does not always include personification. For instance, in Galatians 4, the allegories of Sarah and Hagar, who represent the heavenly Jerusalem and Mount Sinai, are not personifications. Although personifications can occur in allegories, it is suggested that one distinguish the parts (personifications) from the whole (allegory).

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45 Whitman, *Allegory*, 2.

46 For more on this, see David Dawson, *Allegorical Readers and Cultural Revision in Ancient Alexandria* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1992), 3, 243.

47 Thomas Middleton Raysor, ed., *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism* (London: Constable & Co, 1936), 30.

48 See for example, C.S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), and Barney, *Allegories*. Both authors use the terms interchangeably. While Bloomfield goes into great detail discussing the similarities and differences between "personification allegory" and symbol, he never distinguishes personification from allegory [Bloomfield, "Grammatical Approach," 168-171].

49 Lausberg, *Handbook*, 399.

50 Therefore, Dawson defines metaphors and personifications as "potential metaphors," since an allegory is a metaphor or personification that has been stretched into an extensive narrative [Dawson, *Allegorical Readers*, 5-6].

Anthropomorphism: God in the image of man

Another trope that gets confused with personification is anthropomorphism.[51] Purists define anthropomorphism as the representation of gods in human shape,[52] while others use the term in a broad sense, as a synonym for personification—"any attribution of human characteristics to that which is not human."[53] Within this work, we shall refer to anthropomorphism in the restricted sense as well—the attribution of human characteristics, such as form, passions, feelings and attitude, to God.[54]

Prosopopoiia: Giving voice to another

Another term which requires specification is *prosopopoiia.* In fact, the term personification is derived from *prosopopoiia*, which properly defined is the act of giving voice to a figure such as an opponent, a fictive representative of a people, an ancient nobleman raised from the dead,[55] or even a god in order to

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51 Anthropopathism, the attribution of human emotions, is also used in both the narrow sense, referring only to the gods, and the broad sense, referring to any nonhuman entity. See Edwin M. Yamauchi, "Anthropomorphism in Ancient Religions," *BSac*, no. January (1968), 30-32; and Edwin M. Yamauchi, "Anthropomorphism in Hellenism and Judaism," *BSac*, no. July (1970), 212-222. Yamauchi tried to coin a word, "anthropopraxism," that would combine anthropomorphism and anthropopathism [Yamauchi, "Ancient Religions," 29]. However, few actually use this word.

52 E.g. Cicero claims that philosophers use it deliberately to instruct and persuade the ignorant [Cicero, *De Natura Deorum* I.xxvii.77].

53 G.B. Caird, *The Language and Imagery of the Bible* (London: Duckworth, 1980), 172. For examples of the latter, see Emma Stafford and Judith Herrin, eds., *Personification in the Greek World: From Antiquity to Byzantium* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 2005), xix, and Alexander Regier, "Figuring It Out: The Origin of Language and Anthropomorphism," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 42, no. 4 (2006), 412.

54 For an ancient discussion of anthropomorphism, see the speech of Aristobulus as recorded in Eusebius, *Praep. Evang.* 8.10.

55 Quintilian notes that some distinguish between the rest of these examples and the speech with a historical figure, which they prefer to call "διαλόγος" or *sermocinatio*. He, however, refuses to accept this distinction (*Inst.* 9.2.31). Rowe extends this distinction even further: he defines *sermocinatio* as the giving of voice to any person, real or imagined, and *prosopopoiia* as the giving of voice to any non-human thing [Galen O. Rowe, "Style," in *Handbook of Classical Rhetoric in the Hellenistic Period 330 B.C. -- A.D. 400*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 144]. Similarly, Erasmus made a useful distinction: whereas *prosopopoiia* is the giving of voice to a fictive person, *prosopographia* involves giving voice to a nonhuman entity or general object. See Erasmus, *De Copia* in Craig R. Thompson, ed., *Collected Works of Erasmus: Literary and Educational Writings 2 De Copia / De Ratione Studii* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 17-28. Such a distinction occasionally occurs before Erasmus, particularly with the term ἠθοποιΐα, see R. Dean Anderson Jr., *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 61, 107. Cf. Lausberg, *Handbook*, 371.

strengthen the argument of the author who employs the device.[56] According to Quintilian, these *fictiones personarum* (impersonations) can be used 1) to expose an opponent's inner thoughts, 2) to introduce imaginary conversations, or 3) to supply an avenue for the author to advise (*suadendo*), to rebuke (*obiurgando*), to complain (*querendo*), to praise (*laudando*), or to mourn (*miserando*).[57]

The closest Quintilian approaches our definition of personification is his discussion concerning giving voice to the gods and giving life to things such as Virgil's Rumour,[58] Prodicus' Pleasure and Virtue, and Ennius' Death and Life, which Quintilian simply defines as *prosopopoiia*.[59] Such a generalisation is also the case for the author of *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, who defines *conformatio* as "giving voice to a person, to that which is mute, to that which is without form or to that which is general."[60] We shall refer to the giving of voice to another person or a god as *prosopopoiia* since humans and gods are considered to have the capacity to speak, but the giving of voice to inanimate objects, animals or character traits, which are not typically thought of as speaking, as personification.[61]

Hypostasis: Part personification

The term hypostasis has served as a source of confusion since the early church where both Greek-speaking theologians and (even more so) the Latin ones struggled with whether to translate the Greek term as *substantia* or *persona.*[62] The two possible meanings which we are most concerned with are 1) as a rhetorical figure, "the full expression or expansion of an idea," or 2) as a being,

56 Erasmus, *De Copia* in Thompson, ed., *Erasmus*, 17-28. For its role in the progymnasmata, see Kennedy, *Classical Rhetoric*, 202-206. Fontanier states that personification, apostrophe and dialogue often accompany *prosopopoiia*, which "consiste à mettre en quelque sorte en scène, les absens, les morts, les êtres surnaturels, ou même les êtres inanimés; à les faire agir, parler, répondre, ainsi qu'on l'entend; ou tout au moins à les prendre pour confidens, pour témoins, pour garans, pour accusateurs, por vengeurs, pour judes, etc.; et cela, ou par feinte, ou sérieusement, suivant qu'on est ou qu'on n'est pas le maître de son imagination," [Fontanier, *Les Figures du Discours*, 404].

57 Quintilian, *Inst.* 9.2.30.

58 However, Virgil does not ever really give Lady Rumour a voice. She is said "to talk" but the reader never "hears" her firsthand. Although she is quick to share that which is false and wicked, right and true, she inserts these things into the conversations of men (IV.153-216).

59 *Inst.* 9.2.36.

60 IV.LIII.66. This definition is similar to Quintilian's definition of *fictiones personarum.*

61 According to Paxon, "a primary taxonomic point" for personification is "the presence, absence, or varieties of speech produced by such characters," [James J. Paxon, *The Poetics of Personification* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 3].

62 See "hypostasis" in Van A. Harvey, *A Handbook of Theological Terms* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 123.

"a separate existence" (i.e. individual entity).[63] Different authors use hypostasis without qualifying which of these two meanings they employ, and some authors use this term for an entire other meaning altogether. For instance, some use hypostasis as synonymous with personification,[64] still others as synonymous with an autonomous power,[65] and others as something in between the two.[66] The term has also been used to refer to anthropomorphism[67] and synecdoche (a reference to a whole by the naming of a part).[68]

We shall follow the definition which holds hypostasis as that which falls between a personification and an autonomous being as it occupies "an intermediate position between personalities and abstract beings."[69] The figure

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63 H.G Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 1895.

64 See Ringgren, *Word*, 8. Although Ringgren endorses Mowinckel's definition of hypostasis as "a personification of qualities, functions, limbs, etc. of a higher god," he goes on to say: "there are cases when a divine quality is spoken of as an independent entity without it being personified, and I should like to use the term 'hypostasis' in these cases as well." See S. Mowinckel, "Hypostasis," in *Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1928), 2065. See also Ringgren, *Word*, 8.

65 E.g. Baines, *Fecundity Figures*, 20 fn 1: "accorded a separate existence and may often be represented with the deity." Baines cites 'the splendour of Re' as his example. Perhaps another example of a hypostasis as a distinct entity is Philo's Logos in *Leg. All* 3.177: ὁ δε ᾽Ιακὼβ καὶ τὸν λόγον ὑπερκύψας ὑπ᾽ αὐτοῦ φησί τρέφεσθαι τοῦ θεοῦ…τροφέρα τὸν θεόν, οὐχὶ λόγον, ἡγεῖται, τὸν δε αγγελον, ὅς εστι λόγος, ὥσπερ ἰατρὸν κακῶν· Here at least, it seems the Logos has now been exalted to an angelic being.

66 W. O. E. Oesterley, *The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue* (London: Pitman, 1907), 169.

67 E.g. Barney defines hypostasis as "the materializing of the divine substance (God walking in the garden) and may be defined as the reification of abstractions which are thought to be a part of the complex whole," [Barney, *Allegories*, 35].

68 E.g. T.J. Wray and Gregory Mobley recently defined biblical references to God's arm, hand, and sword as hypostases used to distance God from the work of evil; "It was not *God* who punished me; it was the *hand* of God," [T.J. Wray and Gregory Mobley, *The Birth of Satan* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 46, 40]. Perhaps to avoid this problem, Cornelis Bennema refers to Lady Wisdom as a "personification/hypostatization" [Cornelis Bennema, *The Power of Saving Wisdom* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2002), 61]. Moreover, within this discussion, often authors use ambiguous terms such as "almost hypostatised," [E.g. Gregg, *Wisdom*, xxxi, xxxvii; Oesterley, *The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue*, 169; and David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979), 34].

69 Oesterley, *The Religion and Worship of the Synagogue*, 169. See also W. Bousset, *Religion des Judentums im neutl. Zeitalter* (Berlin: 1906), 394: he defines it as a "Mitteldinge zwischen Personen und abstrakten Wesen, nicht so losgelöst von Gott wie die konkreten Engelgestalten, mehr mit seinem Wesen verschmolzen und zu ihm gehörig, aber doch wieder gesondert gedacht." Cf. Gerhard Pfeifer, *Ursprung und Wesen der Hypostasenvorstellung im Judentum* (Stuggart: Calwer, 1967), 14-15: who defines the term as "eine Größe, die teilhat am Wesen einer Gottheit, die durch sie handelnd in die Welt eingreift, ohne daß sich ihr Wesen im Wirken dieser Hypostase erschöpft," and Lorenz Dürr, *Die Wertung des göttlichen Wortes im Alten Testament und im Antiken Orient* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1938), 123; according to Dürr, a hypostasis "göttliches Mittelwesen zwischen Gott und Welt tätig ist." Cf. also Ringgren, *Word*, 8.

has moved beyond merely representing an attribute of someone else (i.e. a representative personification), but has not yet obtained an autonomous status.[70] Just as an adolescent boy is caught between childhood and adulthood—where he is more than a boy but less than a man—at any given moment displaying qualities of either state, so also a hypostasis is part personification and part independent agent.[71]

Perhaps, Seneca's statement exemplifies it best:

> Just as the rays of the sun do not need to touch the earth, but still abide at the source from which they are sent, even so the great and hallowed soul, which has come down in order that we may have a nearer knowledge of divinity, does indeed associate with us, but still cleaves to its origin; on that source it depends, thither it turns its gaze and strives to go, and it concerns itself with our doings only as a being superior to ourselves.[72]

So, a hypostasis, as a personification emanates from a divine power, but this emanation has not yet been terminated; therefore, the personification cannot yet graduate to become its own independent power.[73] Despite the desire for clarity, it is difficult to avoid "half-abstract, half concrete terms"[74] when referring to a hypostasis, since the figure itself is ambiguously "more than a personification and less than a myth."[75]

Since a hypostasis is at least a personification in part, in our attempt to move beyond the debate, we shall focus on the personification part of a possible hypostasis, such as Wisdom, Logos and Sin.

Summary and Conclusion

In sum, personification is the attribution of human traits to any inanimate object, abstract concept or impersonal being. Although it can speak of one thing in a way that is suggestive of another, it should be distinguished from metaphor, since it actually becomes the character used with action verbs most often associated with humans. Moreover, although personifications can occur within allegories, they do not have to. When they do, one should distinguish between the former which make up the latter.

Furthermore, we suggest that anthropomorphism should be reserved only for the representation of God with human form and emotions. *Prosopopoiia*—the giving of voice to another person or god—should *not* be seen as

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70 Again, by autonomous we do not necessarily mean outside of God's sovereignty.

71 See Ringgren, *Word*, 119: "the obscure position between personal being and principle."

72 Seneca, *Ep.* 41.5.

73 Gregg, *Wisdom*, xxxv.

74 Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 242-243.

75 Lewis, *Allegory*, 49.

personification since both persons or gods are considered to have the ability to speak. However, the giving of voice to an inanimate object, abstract concept or impersonal being *should be* seen as personification since they are not considered to have the capacity to speak. Finally, a hypostasis is a figure which stands between a personification and an autonomous being—not altogether one or the other but able to be both for the sake of the argument.[76]

Term	Our Definition
1. Personification	The attribution of human traits to an inanimate object, abstract idea or impersonal being which is used with action verbs most commonly employed to describe the action of a person. It can be given a voice and be casual, general or representative.
2. Metaphor	The most common trope which speaks of one thing in a way that is suggestive of another; it encompasses personification, allegory, anthropomorphism, et al.
3. Allegory	An extended metaphor that represents one thing by another, which may or may not include personification.
4. Anthropomorphism	The representation of God in human shape and emotions.
5. *Prosopopoiia*	The act of giving a voice to another person separate from the author.
6. Hypostasis	A figure which stands between a personification and an independent being, more than a personification but not quite an autonomous power.

Now that personification has been defined and distinguished, we can discuss possible purposes for the trope.

76 See Ringgren, *Word*, 119 and Lewis, *Allegory*, 49.

Chapter 2

The Purposes of Personification

Introduction

In the last chapter, we defined personification and discussed the trope in respect to other tropes closely related to it. Now that we have a definition which can help us recognise a personification, it is important to discuss possible purposes for personifications. Therefore, we shall now survey purposes given for personifications by rhetoricians from the Greco-Roman world to modernity.

In order to get a good grasp on possible purposes for personification, we shall survey three sections of literature on the topic. First, since personification is a type of metaphor we shall summarise both ancient (1) and modern (2) theories of metaphor followed by a discussion of modern theories of personification (3). We shall propose that the primary purposes for metaphor and personification are variations of the following:

1) To decorate or amplify,
2) To educate or clarify,
3) To motivate or manipulate,
4) To expose the cause of something,
5) To provide new insight, and
6) To deflect attention away from difficult topics.

1. A Sample of Ancient Theories of Metaphor

As mentioned above, the classical authors did not distinguish in detail between metaphor and personification. Thus, in order to understand the purpose of personification according to Greco-Roman rhetoric, one must understand the purpose of metaphor in that literature. This is not to say the sage or the apostle sought to apply contemporary rhetorical devices and manoeuvres; rather it is only to demonstrate what people thought about personification, when they thought about it, during the times of our authors.

Although Aristotle and Cicero define metaphor, they do not spend much time on its purpose, except to point to its function of ornamentation[1] and substitution.[2] Quintilian adds to and expands upon these two purposes.[3] According to him, metaphors serve to affect the emotions[4] or to clarify.[5] Similarly, the author of *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* sees metaphor as most profitable for amplification and as an appeal to pity.[6] Philo comes to a similar conclusion when he asks why Moses speaks of God in terms of human passions.[7] According to Philo, Moses twists the truth by presenting God as one of indignation who uses creation to chastise fools because Moses hoped to eradicate passions and diseases of the soul. Philo insists such a scare tactic is the only way a fool can receive correction,[8] since, in the words of Demetrius, "in the end, such language is simply more terrifying."[9]

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1 See Aristotle, *Poetics* XXI.4; His treatment of metaphor comes in his discussion of diction, of which he presents the noun as a constituent part. According to Aristotle nouns can be common, obsolete, metaphorical (μεταφορά), ornamental (κόσμος), onomatopoietical, etc. (lit: κύριον ἢ γλῶττα ἢ μεταφορὰ ἢ κόσμος ἢ πεποιημένον κτλ.) Aristotle goes on to discuss each one of these qualifications in turn—except for the qualification of decoration (κόσμος). Here, it seems, for Aristotle, the qualifications of metaphor and decoration are synonymous, so that a metaphorical noun serves as decoration. He goes on to say that sometimes decoration is necessary due to the lack of a word to describe something (i.e. a catachresis).

2 See Aristotle, *Poetics* XI.14 and Cicero, *De Oratore* 3.53.205. In the latter, Cicero suggests that it should be used sparingly or avoided altogether as a tool to enliven a discourse. See James J. Paxon, *The Poetics of Personification* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 16.

3 Quintilian presents three purposes for rhetoric—informing, moving, and giving pleasure [*Institutes*, III.8.7]. Cf. Heinrich Lausberg, *Handbook of Literary Rhetoric*, trans. Matthew T. Bliss et. al. (Leiden: Brill, 1998), 253.

4 Coleridge picks up this purpose when he says that the mention of literal powers in the ancient world could not produce the "same unmixed effect" on the mind as the personification of the powers [Thomas Middleton Raysor, ed., *Coleridge's Miscellaneous Criticism* (London: Constable & Co, 1936), 20].

5 Quintilian, *Inst.* 8.6.18-19. Since Quintilian also presents effect as a possible purpose for metaphor, he should not be merely considered, "the exponent of the clearly unsatisfactory view that metaphor is simply the substation of a decorative word" [Janet Martin Soskice, *Metaphor and Religious Language* (London: Clarendon Press, 1985), 8].

6 Literally: Proficit plurimum in amplificationis partibus et commiseratione (IV.LIII.66). Cf. R. Dean Anderson Jr., *Glossary of Greek Rhetorical Terms* (Leuven: Peeters, 2000), 106.

7 Philo, *Quod Deus* 60. Although this is a question concerning anthropomorphism, Philo's answer is appropriate for personification as well.

8 Quod Deus 67-69.

9 On Style, II.100.

2. Modern Theories of Metaphor

Although some modern semantic theorists may consider these ancient accounts flawed—due to the tendency of these ancient accounts to speak of metaphor as something which happens to the individual word rather than the whole context[10]—many modern theories of metaphor and personification remain nuanced variations or scientific extensions of these ancient conclusions.[11] Since personification is a type of metaphor, these theories can prove helpful as well. We shall therefore now look at some modern theories of it. Again, this is not to suggest the sage or the apostle thought in these modern terms in their utilisation of the trope. However, these modern theories are designed to explain ancient as well as modern metaphors.

Janet Martin Soskice divides modern theories of metaphor into three divisions—substitutionary, emotive, and incremental. Within the *substitution theories*,[12] proponents argue that although a metaphor could be expressed in non-metaphorical terms, they are employed for either ornamental[13] or didactic purposes.[14] For the former theorists "metaphor has the virtue of clothing tired literal expression in attractive new garb, of alleviating boredom."[15] For others, metaphor has the ability to make an idea accessible to the uneducated, who "are not ready to take intellectual things neat with nothing else."[16] In a sense then, metaphor functions "to make the lazy or ignorant reader have a vision like that of a skilled critic."[17]

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10 See Soskice, *Metaphor*, 24-53. Cf. Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, trans. Robert Czerny (London: Routledge, 2006), 49.

11 See Ricoeur's comment on many of the most recent works on metaphor, namely that despite "highly technical analyses…their fundamental hypothesis is exactly the same as that of classical rhetoric," [Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 118].

12 See Soskice, *Metaphor*, 24.

13 Here, the metaphor can simply substitute for a simile. Soskice rejects this idea because a simile compares "two antecedently similar entities," but a metaphor evokes as similar that which had previously been seen as dissimilar [ibid., 31].

14 See for example, Fontanier's definition of metaphor as that which presents one idea under a more striking or famous sign. It is that which transmits ideas in a livelier fashion, which clothes thoughts in richer colours, which reflects different faces and portrays them in the most graceful light [Pierre Fontanier, *Les Figures du Discours* (Paris: Flammarion, 1988), 99,174]. Soskice also rejects the substitution theory altogether, referring to it as "a 'nobody's theory' of metaphorical meaning" because it says no significant difference is made by the metaphor [Soskice, *Metaphor*, 31].

15 Soskice, *Metaphor*, 24.

16 Ibid.

17 Donald Davidson, "What Metaphors Mean," in *On Metaphor*, ed. Sheldon Sacks (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 45.

George Lakoff and Mark Turner come to a similar conclusion: metaphor is not a mere word play, rather it is "endemically conceptual in nature" and necessary for struggling with concepts such as life and death. [18]

> Metaphors allow us to make sense of phenomena in the world in human terms—terms that we can understand on the basis of our own motivations, goals, actions and characteristics.[19]

In the *emotive theories*, the metaphor is significant for what it does, rather than for what it says. This is similar to Quintilian, Philo and Demetrius' theories, where metaphor has affective impact, but it is not necessarily incremental to thinking.[20] In the *incremental theories*, however, one holds the view that "what is said by the metaphor can be expressed adequately in no other way," since the combination of parts in a metaphor produce "new and unique agents of meaning."[21] Here, metaphor is a "literary phenomenon" that makes a significant difference to the work by giving new meaning to it, as no other means can produce the same results.[22] Therefore, the metaphor does not merely decorate, explain, compare, or affect: metaphor uniquely communicates.[23]

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18 George Lakoff and Mark Turner, *More than Cool Reason* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1989), 50: "General conceptual metaphors are thus not unique creations of individual poets but are rather part of the way members of a culture have of conceptualizing their experience. Poets, as members of their cultures, naturally make use of these basic conceptual metaphors to communicate with other members, their audience," (p. 9).

19 George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 34: "Viewing something as abstract as inflation in human terms has an explanatory power of the only sort that makes sense to most people." When people suffer under economic losses due to complex problems few understand, personifying inflation as an adversary gives a coherent account for the reason they suffer. Focusing on religious metaphors, Perdue comes to a similar conclusion: a religious metaphor "describes the numinous which in part transcends the limits of space and time, by using finite expressions derived from the experiences of human existence," [Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt* (Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1991), 22].

20 Soskice rejects these theories as well because a metaphor can only do something by saying something.

21 Soskice, *Metaphor*, 31. So also Perdue: "Metaphors are semantic building blocks which not only construct worlds, but are themselves constructed by the very worlds they build. When forced outside the context of the reality systems which they produce, they become estranged from their semantic world which in turn disintegrates and returns to Chaos [Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt*, 23]. Cf. Max Black, *Models and Metaphors* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1962), 46.

22 Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt*, 22-27. With these conclusions considered, the metaphor still "achieves these new and unique agents of meaning" by ornamentation or for the sake of clarification, affective impact, etc.

23 Perdue describes how a metaphor so uniquely communicates. First, it establishes "absurdity and destabilization," where an obviously false statement shocks a person so that it "initially engages the attention and awakens the mind to the possibility of new and significant

Leo Perdue applies an incremental theory to religious language which uses extended metaphors to construct models which disorient, disturb and even shatter conventional theological traditions in order to provide new and revelatory religious insights as well as provide constructions of meaning that "engage the faith and devotion of the hearers."[24] Therefore, "by ordering evocative images of a religious tradition, metaphors provide comprehensible guides for being in the world and an orientation for faith and action."[25]

Seeking to restore the full depth of meaning to Aristotle's theory, Paul Ricoeur most convincingly ascribes all of these categories (substitutionary, emotive and incremental) to metaphor. For Ricoeur, the reason for avoiding limiting metaphor to only one purpose is that the trope has one foot in the domain of rhetoric, whose goal is persuasion, and one foot in the domain of poetry, whose goal is to purge the feelings of pity and fear.[26] So also, metaphor suddenly blends the poet's myth with the real world of prose and employs a liveliness of speech in the service of persuasion.[27]

By combining these distinct universes, metaphor "unleashes the power that certain fictions have to redescribe reality,"[28] and thereby uniquely instructs. Its peculiarity is found not in the noun, the sentence, nor the discourse but in the

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insights." Perhaps an example would be the phrase, "that tree cries." Once a person goes beyond the absurdity (e.g. that a tree does not really cry), they reach a stage of "mimesis" so that through the metaphor there is an extraordinary new set of associations and insights which, in a metaphorical sense, are "unquestionably true and confirmed by the experience of the one engaged." Using our example of the crying tree, now one realises all of the sudden that the tree does indeed looks like it is slumped over and sad. The next stage is the "transformation and restabilization" stage, where the metaphor "possesses a transforming agency which reconstructs, reshapes, and refashions existing conceptual materials into new and more powerful symbolic worlds which define and interpret reality and thereby evoke significant human response and commitment. And when they become the shared heritage of a culture through the network of common social language, metaphors become symbols that give vitality and life to the community which creates and transmits them through story and rite." Perhaps in this stage, the depressed tree becomes personified as a weeping willow and is then given a myth of how a broken hearted lover transformed into this tree which becomes a symbol in the culture for all disheartened lovers. Perdue concludes that throughout these stages there remains a tension between reality and the metaphor as well as an ambiguity since "metaphors by their very nature defy one precise definition" evoking different personal experiences—"emotional, rational, evaluative" [ibid., 24-28]. Cf. Günter Röhser, *Metaphorik und Personifikation der Sünde* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1987), 135.

24 Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt*, 27.

25 Ibid., 27.

26 Ricoeur, *Metaphor*, 8-13. Whereas prose is characterised by the triad rhetoric-proof-persuasion, poetry is characterised by the triad of poiêsis-mimêsis-catharsis.

27 Ibid., 8-39. According to Ricoeur (pp. 10, 34), by conjoining these two worlds through metaphor, Aristotle had an agenda to reconcile the philosopher who was concerned only with what one should say with the orator who was concerned only with how something should be said: "that *what* ought to be said, should be said *as* it ought" (see Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1403b 15-18).

28 Ibid., 5, 37.

copula of the verb "is," which at the same time explains both what "is not" and what "is like."[29] Returning to the conjoining of prose and poetry, he concludes: "To apprehend or perceive, to contemplate, to see similarity—such is metaphor's genius-stroke, which marks the poet, naturally enough, but also the philosopher."[30]

Finally, F.M. Cornford proposes another purpose for metaphor in his discussion of Epicurus:

> Almost all our philosophical language is unconsciously metaphorical; and even when terms are still felt as metaphors, they may be used to conceal awkward gaps…[Epicurus] perpetuates the metaphor to hide from himself and his readers the inability of his system to explain in its own materialistic terms the powers of the mind.[31]

According to this conclusion, Epicurus used metaphor as a means of deflecting attention away from questions his system could not answer to metaphorical "smoke and mirrors."[32]

3. Modern Theories of Personification

We shall now survey the proposed purposes for personification in chronological order. First, Hugh Blair suggests that people personify in order to express passionate emotions; personification is a sign of strong passions which "struggle for vent, and if they can find no other object, will rather than be silent, pour themselves forth."[33] He continues:

> There is a wonderful proneness in human nature to animate all objects…almost every emotion, which in the least agitates the mind, bestows upon its object a momentary idea of life. Let a man by an unwary step, sprain his ankle…upon a

29 Ibid., 6. This is not to say that metaphor is an abbreviated simile. Instead, a simile should be placed in subordination to metaphor, the more elegant and powerful of the two (pp. 26-30, 53).

30 Ibid., 30.

31 F.M. Cornford, *Principium Sapientiae* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1971), 30 (parenthesis mine).

32 Ibid., 30.

33 Hugh Blair, *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Dublin: Messrs. Whitestone, 1783), 392. He concludes all strong passions have "a tendency to use this figure, not only love, anger and indignation, but…grief, remorse and melancholy."

> stone, and in the ruffled discomposed moment, he will, sometimes, feel himself disposed to break the stone in pieces, or to utter passionate expressions against it, as if it had done him an injury.[34]

Likewise, according to T.B.L. Webster, ancient authors employed personification in an attempt to understand things "which suddenly appear startlingly uncontrollable and independent" so much as "to have some kind of life and so are in some way human,"[35] such as the blaze of sunrise, the fear of disease and the power of desire. Furthermore, Webster argues that authors would use personification as a means of explaining the abstract and of persuading the reader of the importance of the image personified.[36]

Rather than as a means of understanding startlingly uncontrollable desires, Lewis says people personify these desires to control them. For instance, as an aid to fight immoral passions a person is naturally forced to personify their passions in the images of the battlefield or arena.[37] Now, in a moral revolution, Pleasures are "to be fought down and a guard must be set lest they slip through behind the line and drag a host of others with them."[38] On the other hand, it is also common to see virtues personified in contexts of ethical exhortations to avoid illicit passions.[39]

Similarly, Edwin Honig says that personifications can be used:

> To measure the distance that exists between the world of appearance, chance and self-deception (i.e. our world as it is) and the world of reality, order, and truth (i.e. our world as it should be) so that a self-embattled condition develops when the rupture between "worlds" is recognized in every human action.[40]

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34 Ibid., 384-385. He goes on to illustrate: "If one has been long accustomed to a certain set of objects, which have made a strong impression on his imagination; as to a house, where he has passed many agreeable years; or to fields, and trees, and mountains, among which he has often walked with the greatest delight; when he is obliged to part with them, especially if he has no prospect of seeing them again, he can scarce avoid having somewhat of the same feeling as when he is leaving old friends. They seem endowed with life. They become objects of his affection; and in a moment of his parting, it scarce seems absurd to him to give vent to his feeling in words and to take a formal adieu."

35 T.B.L. Webster, "Personification as a Mode of Greek Thought," *Journal of Warburg and* Courtauld Institutes 17 (1954), 10.

36 Ibid., 10-21. Similarly, Ricoeur qualifies personification as "the same as presenting one idea under the sign of another which is more striking and better known," [Paul Ricoeur, *The Rule of Metaphor*, trans. Robert Czerny (London: Routledge, 1997), 59-61].

37 C.S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 63.

38 Ibid.

39 E.g. Seneca, *Ep.* LXXXIV.11.

40 Edwin Honig, *Dark Conceit: the Making of Allegory* (London: Faber and Faber, 1959), 117. Similarly, Köhler argues that the purpose of anthropomorphism is "to make God accessible to man. They hold the door open for encounter and controversy between God's will and man's will," [Ludwig Köhler, *Old Testament Theology* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1957), 24]. Cf. Paul de Man, *The Rhetoric of Romanticism* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984), 239-262.

Therefore, personification becomes a rhetorical instrument that fills out a preconceived structure or theory that opposes a realistic—objective, pragmatic, experiential—view of life in the midst of a struggle to gain power or to maintain a system of beliefs.[41] Within this struggle, "personifications do not oppose a realistic account of the universe but give proof to the physical and ethical realities of life objectively conceived."[42] In this sense, then, personification is:

> Another form of literary analogy, so that when it is most explicit it becomes a sledge hammer in the hands of the writer, making it resoundingly evident what cannot possibly be mistaken.[43]

Rather than a way to measure the distance between two worlds, Stephen Barney sees personification as a way to bridge two worlds, to "merge the abstract (and real) and the concrete (and fictional)."[44] He explains that the personification is fantastic since such persons like Death or Lady Providence are never met in the real world of common sense.[45] Rather, the personification is only real "in the sense that it affirms, it forcibly connects the fictional world to a world we might consider true." Therefore, personification has a dual nature: "it is fantastic in terms of fictional form but real in terms of what we (may) believe."[46]

On a different note, John Whitman says personification is "the grammatical counterpart of the philosophic study of causes… (which) seeks to expose the underlying principles of events."[47] Rather than saying a person performs a wise action, the use of personification specifies Wisdom as the principal cause. So also, rather than saying a person falls in love, personification points to Love itself as precipitating the fall. Personification then "begins with the underlying core itself, and then elaborates it into a fiction."[48]

Rather than a philosophical account for personification, Craig Hamilton gives a psychological one. He proposes that the reason people write in personification is that they first think in personifications, that "a metaphor in

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41 Honig, *Dark Conceit*, 179.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid., 116.

44 Stephen A. Barney, *Allegories of History, Allegories of Love* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1979), 24.

45 Ibid., 20.

46 Ibid. This is similar to Köhler's theory of the purpose behind anthropomorphism: "to make God accessible to man. They hold the door open for encounter and controversy between God's will and man's will," [Köhler, *Old Testament Theology*, 24]. Cf. de Man, *Rhetoric*, 239-262.

47 J. Whitman, *Allegory: The Dynamics of an Ancient and Medieval Technique* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 22 (parenthesis mine).

48 Ibid.

language normally reveals a related conceptual metaphor in thought."[49] Therefore, one should consider personification as both a product of thought and speech. He concludes:

> When we personify we bring events like death down to human scale so as to understand them concretely as personified agents analogous to human beings. With the Grim Reaper, we transform death from an event to an action caused by an agent. On this view, agency is inherent to personification and not exclusive of it. In sum, *we personify to make the world make sense to us on human scale.*[50]

Conclusion

We can now summarise the conjectures of the purpose of personification from the time of Aristotle to today—it communicates in a way like no other in order to decorate or amplify, to educate or clarify, to motivate or manipulate, to

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49 Craig A. Hamilton, "Mapping the mind and the body: on W.H. Auden's personifications," *Style* 36, no. 3 (2002), 408-427. A personification then becomes "as ultimate as speech itself, and speech as ultimate as thought," an "instinctive and necessary act of the mind exploring reality and ordering experience," [John Middleton Murray, *Countries of the Mind* (London: Oxford University Press, 1931), 1-2].

50 Hamilton, "Mapping the mind," 408-427 (italics mine). Blair argues that personification finds its roots at the very origin of language, which in the beginning was full of figures and metaphors of "the boldest, daring, and most natural kind," [Blair, *Lectures*, 131-132, 383; see also Thomas Blackwell, *An Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer* (London: Scholars Press, 1735; reprint, 1972), 41]. According to Blair, such metaphorical language can be seen in ancient works such as the OT, where iniquity is expressed by a spotted garment, a sinful life by a crooked path, and the like (p. 135). Over time, however, "style became more precise, understanding, more exercised, and fancy, less so that in the place of Poets, Philosophers became the instructors of men," (p. 136-137). At this time, "the ancient metaphorical and poetical dress of Language was…laid aside from the intercourse of men, and reserved for those occasions only, on which ornament was professedly studied" [p. 137; See also Alexander Regier, "Figuring It Out: The Origin of Language and Anthropomorphism," *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 42, no. 4 (2006), 414]. Moreover, according to Lausberg, what primeval authors and audiences understood as reality, modern humanity now understands as only rhetoric. "The explanation that the metaphor has developed from the simile is only a later rational interpretation of the primeval-magical equivalence between the metaphorical description and that which it describes: 'he is a lion in battle' denotes, in primeval magical terms: 'the warrior was a real lion; he had taken on the nature of a lion.' The metaphor is a primeval relic of the magical possibility of identification, which is now divested of its religious-magical character and has become a poetical game. This poetical game does, however, still hide evocative magical effects which a poet can actualize," [Lausberg, *Handbook*, 251-252]. It is to this "poetical game" that Nicolas Boileau refers as a Poet's "inventions" [Nicolas Boileau, *L'Art Poétique* (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1970), ln. 160-174, (p. 88); ln. 227-230 (p. 90). Cf. Owen Barfield, *Saving the Appearances* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1988), 86]. As we have seen above, however, in investigating ancient works it proves difficult to distinguish whether or not the primeval relic has been "divested of its religious-magical character." Moreover, even if the personification is a poetical game, it is uncertain whether the author has not actualised the "evocative magical effects" hidden within the trope.

expose the cause or to deflect attention away from an insufficient system—and possibly a combination of the above. Therefore, we shall investigate each personification in *Wisdom* and Romans in light of these purposes, and perhaps will discover others along the way. As part of rhetoric, personifications primarily serve as a tool to persuade. The crucial question then will be: do the sage and the apostle seek to persuade by means such as decorating, manipulating, clarifying, or avoiding an issue?

Section II: Introduction

It has been said that *Wisdom* is undoubtedly the most important wisdom writing from the Hellenistic Diaspora.[1] Scholars generally agree that it is a unified composition[2] written by "one cultured, educated, profoundly religious, hellenized Jew living in cosmopolitan Alexandria,"[3] who used philosophy[4] and Greek rhetoric in a highly sophisticated way,[5] probably during a time of

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1 J.J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 178. Furthermore, "In antiquity, it was more widely accepted as canonical than any of the other 'deutero-canonical' books and was considered scripture by Clement of Alexandria and even included in the Muratorian Canon."

2 Ibid., 180-181.

3 James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and Its Consequences* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 89. This is during the time when Alexandria was "the most influential Diaspora community" in and the cultural capital of the Greco-Roman world, [John M. G. Barclay, "The Jews of the Diaspora," in *Early Christian thought in its Jewish context*, ed. John M.G. Barclay and John Philip McMurdo Sweet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 28]. Although most scholars agree that Alexandria is the probable setting, according to Grabbe, "There is no reason why the book could not have been written in Jerusalem or elsewhere in Palestine," [Lester L. Grabbe, *Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 84]. For factors pointing toward Alexandria as the place of composition, see Daniel J. Harrington, *Invitation to the Apocrypha* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 55-57.

4 Larcher concludes that when it comes to philosophy, the sage knew a little about a lot of things, but not a lot about anything [Chrysostome Larcher, *Études sur le Livre de la Sagesse* (Paris: Gabalda, 1969), 235-236. Cf. Paul Heinisch, *Die Griechische Philosophie im Buche der Weisheit* (Münster: Aschendorff, 1908), 155]. However, Winston has demonstrated how the sage actually reflects Middle Platonism [David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979), 25-58]; so that, as Collins concludes: "It is likely then that the combination of Platonic and Stoic ideas in Wis. Sol. did not result from the superficiality of the author, but reflected the philosophical tendencies of his day" [Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 201]. Collins continues: "There is enough correspondence with Philo to debunk the idea that he [the sage] was an idiosyncratic amateur making his own superficial use of philosophical terms" (p. 202). According to Reese, three principal areas of the culture influenced the sage: Epicurean speculation on immortality, popular religion such as the Isis cult, and ethical teachings found in treatises on kingship [Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 89].

5 Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 180-181. So sophisticated is the language and expansive the knowledge, Reese concludes: "it is too learned and complex to have been composed in a short time…the sage was a man who learned as he taught, and he incorporated new insights into his great exhortation," [Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 151]. We can presume that the sage's upbringing during this time was similar to Philo's—from a higher social status that afforded him a Greek education which he did not see as totally incompatible with his Jewish faith [David T. Runia, "Theodicy in Philo of Alexandria," in *Theodicy in the World of the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 576-577]. Alexander DiLella concludes that the sage was more progressive than the conservative Ben Sira, but perhaps not as assimilated as Philo

persecution[6] somewhere between 100 BCE and 50 CE.[7] There is debate as to whether the genre of the work falls under protreptic[8] or encomium[9] or a blend of the two.[10]

[Alexander A. Di Lella, "Conservative and Progressive Theology: Sirach and Wisdom," *CBQ* 28 (1966), 139-154].

6 "Jews and native Egyptians had a long history of enmity, with rival and mutually abusive accounts of the Exodus"; however, from 30 BCE, Greeks also turned against the Jews for their rebellion against Roman taxes and rule [Barclay, "The Jews of the Diaspora," 29]. Cheon believes the sage responds to the riot in Alexandria during the reign of Gaius Caligula, when "the violent mob attempted to destroy the Jewish community by looting, burning, torturing, and killing," [S. Cheon, *The Exodus Story in the Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 144]. Furthermore, Cheon considers the young man who died young as a representative of a real victim to persecution who is still fresh in the minds of his audience [Samuel Cheon, "Three Characters in the Wisdom of Solomon 3-4," *JSP* 12, no. 1 (2001), 113]. In contrast, Collins cuts against the grain and sees the references to persecution as having a "quasi-philosophical" characteristic rather than pointing to a veiled historical experience [Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 179].

7 Larcher dates the book in three parts, beginning around 31 BCE and concluding around 10 BCE [Chrysostome Larcher, *Le Livre de la Sagesse*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Paris: Gabalda, 1983), 141-161]. Charlesworth dates the book sometime after the defeat of Anthony in 31 BCE [James H. Charlesworth, "Introduction: Wisdom, a Spotless Mirror, and Reflections of Traditions," in *Light in a Spotless Mirror*, ed. James H. Charlesworth and Michael A. Daise (London: Trinity Press International, 2003), 2]. Similarly, Collins places its writing anytime between 30 BCE-70CE, [Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 179] and Reese "about a generation before the birth of Jesus," [Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 89]. Maurice Gilbert, *La Critique des dieux dans le livre de la Sagesse* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1973), 130-131, prefers a date around the reign of Augustus (so also Grabbe, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 90). According to David Winston it was written in the first century C.E. due to some 35 words not found before then [Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 22-23]. For a detailed discussion of those who prefer a dating during the reign of Caligula, see Cheon, *Exodus*, 127-131 and G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature Between the Bible and the Mishnah* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981), 175. Cf. Davila, who argues for an even later date in order to support his theory that *Wisdom* was a Christian work [James R. Davila, *The Provenance of the Pseudepigrapha: Jewish, Christian, or other?* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 225].

8 Protreptic is "an inaugural lecture that tried to gain converts and attract young people to the philosophical life... it is not a formal treatise on abstract concepts of philosophy rather it is an appeal to follow a meaningful philosophy as a way of life," [Henri I. Marrou, *A History of Education in Antiquity*, trans. G. Lamb, 3 ed. (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1956), 206-207]. According to Reese, *Wisdom* meets the requirements of a protreptic: 1) "a positive and even apologetic attitude about the control of the universe," 2) "a firm position against opposing philosophies of life," 3) "the deliberate display of a wide range of knowledge"; The writing style is "deliberately pedantic," while the presentation is "obviously artificial and sophisticated," [Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 151]. See also F. Focke, *Die Entstehung der Weisheit Salomos* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1913), 85; Nickelsburg, *Jewish Literature*, 175; and A Dupont-Somner, "De l'immortalité astrale dans la 'Sagesse de Salomon' (3.7)," *REG* 62 (1949), 80.

9 An encomium is the genre of praise for a figure, virtue or way of life. For *Wisdom* as an encomium see Maurice Gilbert, "Wisdom Literature," in *Jewish Writings of the Second Temple Period*, ed. M.E. Stone (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 307-308.

10 It seems the sage draws from a number of traditions: the sage includes elements from an apocalyptic tradition especially in 1-5, terminology from Hellenistic philosophy especially in

The two chief purposes of *Wisdom* can be found in the first and last verses of the book: it was written to encourage the audience to seek righteousness (1.1) and to remind them that God has never neglected his people nor will he ever abandon them (19.22).[11] With this latter purpose, the sage seeks to encourage Jews in the midst of persecution.[12] John Barclay states that the sage "fosters a cultural antagonism in which Jews under stress are encouraged to trust that God will vindicate their righteousness and confound their enemies," which would enable the godly to persevere in difficult days.[13]

Scholars also propose that the sage attempts to call Jews back to Judaism as well as to address any pagan who might listen.[14] According to Reese, the sage most likely writes to Greek speaking Jews, many of whom were perhaps young men of the educated elite seeking to climb the social ladder.[15] These young men would be informed enough to understand the sage's OT references as well as his use of popular Hellenistic philosophy. It has also been suggested that some of these young men were tempted to compromise or forsake the traditional faith for the positive appeal of Hellenism on the one side and the desire to avoid persecution on the other.[16] It is also possible that the close

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6-9, and narratives from the Pentateuch in 10-19, (Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 182). Reese sees an influence in the "widespread anthropological speculation of religious inspiration devoted to elaborating the kingly ideal in the Hellenistic world from the time of Alexander the Great." Although these were originally meant for monarchs, they became an ordinary vehicle for tracing a moral ideal [Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 72-73].

11 For discussions on the structure of *Wisdom,* see A. Schmitt, *Wende Des Lebens*, *Untersuchungen zu einem Situations-Motiv der Bibel* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1996), A. G. Wright, "The Structure of the Book of Wisdom," *Bib* 48 (1967), 165-184; James M. Reese, "Plan and Structure in the Book of Wisdom," *CBQ* 27 (1965), 391-399; and Michael Kolarcik, *The Ambiguity of Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-6* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991), 1-27.

12 "It is clear that the author is speaking for a community persecuted and under siege," [Michael Kolarcik, "Universalism and Justice," in *Treasures of Wisdom: Festschrift for M. Gilbert*, ed. N. Claduch-Benages (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999), 301].

13 John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora from Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE-117 CE)* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 191. See also Cheon, *Exodus*, 147.

14 David A. deSilva, *Introducing the Apocrypha* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002), 135; Bruce Metzger, *An Introduction to the Apocrypha* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), 68; W. O. E. Oesterley, *An introduction to the books of the Apocrypha* (London: SPCK, 1953), 212-213; Ernest G. Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 5; Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 63-64; Joseph Reider, *The Book of Wisdom* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), 10-11.

15 See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 151 and Barclay, *Diaspora*, 106.

16 Cf. J.P. Weisengoff, "The Impious of Wisdom 2," *CBQ* 11 (1949), 40-65: He states that the fools are Jewish contemporaries of the sage who are "under the stress of the constant threat of pogroms." Due to either mockery by the pagans or their love of sensual pleasure, they had surrendered the faith and "banded with pagan sensualities to enjoy the present life to the full and were therefore a source of sorrow and scandal to the faithful."

relationship between religion and philosophy incited the sage to seek to justify his faith in light of the latter.[17]

Using our definition of personification as the attribution of human characteristics to a general object, abstract concept or impersonal being (especially those that take action verbs most often associated with persons), we find a good number of these figures in *Wisdom*.[18] For instance, Dike, Dynamis and Death begin, Creation ends, and Sophia dominates the middle of the book. While most admit the function and character of Sophia within *Wisdom* is "intimately connected with the purpose of the book as a whole,"[19] surely this is the case with the other personifications as well, which as we shall argue, either lie in a very close relationship with Sophia or stand in contradistinction to her. As we shall see, at times, personifications occur as illustrations to present a point, at others, as evidence to prove one.[20]

Often when using a personification, the sage employs different names for the same personification.[21] He refers to Dike and Dynamis in *Wisdom* 1; to Death and Hades in *Wisdom* 1-2;[22] to Ktisis and Cosmos in *Wisdom* 5; and to Wrath, Death, the Destroyer, and Corruption in *Wisdom* 18. Also, according to scholars, Sophia appears under a variety of names in the work (e.g. Dike, Arete,[23] holy Spirit of Instruction,[24] and possibly Logos[25]) so that "Wisdom unites in herself a number of floating conceptions: though alone in kind, she is manifold."[26] Due to the similarities in their actions, their parallel constructions and the pairing of the terms, these personifications in relationship to Sophia

17 Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 147: "As the allegorizing of Philo shows, the close bonds between religion and philosophy in Hellenism forced cultured Jews to justify a faith in the events narrated in Scriptures."

18 The sage employs numerous personifications such as Virtue (Arete), Wrath, Logos, Death and Wisdom. Since Death and Sophia are not clearly personal (see the debate on their nature above), we shall include them as personifications. Cf. Mercy in 16.10; Providence in 14.3; 17.2.

19 J.S. Kloppenborg, "Isis and Sophia in the Book of Wisdom," *HTR* 75 (1982), 63.

20 The sage also employs anthropomorphism: right hand and arm (5.16), eyes (9.9) and ear (1.10). For more on this, see Larcher, *Études*, 403.

21 Cf. James M. Reese, *The Book of Wisdom, Song of Songs* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983), 31.

22 Amir, "The Figure of Death", 157.

23 Cf. Wis. 8.7.

24 Giuseppe Scarpat, *Libro della Sapienza*, 3 vols., vol. 3 (Brescia: Paideia, 1999), 267: According to Scarpat, Sophia, Spirit and Logos are interchangeable in *Wisdom*. According to Mack, "Denn das Pneuma stellt in Wirklichkeit das Wesen der Sophia dar, hinter der ein echtes Gotteswesen steht," [Burton L. Mack, *Logos und Sophia* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 64]. See also Larcher, *Études*, 409-410.

25 For the debate concerning the relationship with Logos and Sophia, see below.

26 J.A.F. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), xxxiii-xxxiv. See also Reider, *Wisdom*, 36, 80 and Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 34, 38-40.

should be seen as most likely synonymous.[27] For simplicity then, we shall primarily refer to Death to represent Hades and Corruption, Creation to represent Ktisis and Cosmos, and Wrath to represent the Destroyer and Corruption. We shall discuss Sophia and those personifications associated with her in chapter 7.

Within this section, we shall begin with the personification of Death and demonstrate that the personification falls within a context of theodicy with the primary goal of distancing God from the entrance of death into the cosmos (chapter 3). Thereafter, we shall discuss the personification of Creation, which we shall argue also occurs in a context of theodicy primarily meant to encourage the persecuted elect (chapter 4). We shall then turn to the personification of the Logos, which the sage uses to ensure the destruction of those who dare persecute God's people (chapter 5).

After discussing the personified Word, we shall focus on the personification of Wrath, which serves to distance God from the slaughter of Israel (chapter 6). Finally, we shall conclude with a treatment of Sophia in context and in light of those personifications associated with her such as Dike, Dynamis, and Arete (chapter 7). We shall show that Sophia appears in two contexts, the salvation of humanity and the suffering of the elect, while those personifications associated with her serve to promise retribution and reward to those in affliction.

27 See James L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 168. The referring to Sophia by different names was common in the Greco-Roman world; for example, Plutarch says the name Isis actually comes from the Greek οἶδα, and as a lover of wisdom is called Athena by some and Dikaiosyne by others [Plutarch, *Moralia,* 351-354].

Chapter 3

The Personification of Death in *Wisdom*

Introduction

Wisdom employs three models to explain the entrance of evil into the world. First, the sage alludes to the Genesis account in order to contrast the divine intention for the purity of creation over against the voluntary partnership of the ungodly with evil (1.13-16). In the second model, the sage also alludes to the Genesis account but contrasts the divine intention for the immortality of humanity over against Death and the Devil (2.23-24). Finally, the sage utilises the framework of pagan worship to demonstrate the entrance of evil through humankind's worship of creation (13.1-14.27).

In the first paradigm, the fools welcome Death *in spite* of God's signs in creation; in the last, they worship creation rather than God *because* of his signs in creation. As opposed to these two models, in 2.23-24, the sage places the brunt of the blame on evil personifications rather than evil humanity. While in *Wisdom* 13-14, the sage holds the people solely responsible for evil, in Wis. 1.13-16 and 2.21-24, he blames personified evil as well.

Since *Wisdom* employs personifications in the models found in 1.13-16 and 2.21-24, we shall now turn to the entrance of Death and the pact of fools in 1.13-16 (1) and then to the entrance of Death and the envy of the Devil in 2.21-24 (2). Thereafter, we shall discuss purpose, proposing that personified Death occurs in contexts where the author seeks to exonerate God from being the cause of death in the world and to motivate the audience to pursue righteousness instead (3).

1. The Fools' Covenant with Death (Wis. 1.12-16)

[12]μὴ ζηλοῦτε θάνατον ἐν πλάνῃ ζωῆς ὑμῶν
μηδὲ ἐπισπᾶσθε ὄλεθρον ἐν ἔργοις χειρῶν
ὑμῶν·
[13]ὅτι ὁ θεὸς θάνατον οὐκ ἐποίησεν
οὐδὲ τέρπεται ἐπ' ἀπωλείᾳ ζώντων.
[14] ἔκτισεν γὰρ εἰς τὸ εἶναι τὰ πάντα,
καὶ σωτήριοι αἱ γενέσεις τοῦ κόσμου,

Do not be zealous for death by the straying of your life, neither bring on destruction by the works of your hands;
For God did not make death, neither does he delight in the destruction of the living. For he created all things to live, the origins of the cosmos are wholesome, and the poison of

καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἐν αὐταῖς φάρμακον ὀλέθρου
οὔτε ᾅδου βασίλειον ἐπὶ γῆς.
15 δικαιοσύνη γὰρ ἀθάνατός ἐστιν.
16 ἀσεβεῖς δὲ ταῖς χερσὶν καὶ τοῖς λόγοις
προσεκαλέσαντο αὐτόν,
φίλον ἡγησάμενοι αὐτὸν ἐτάκησαν
καὶ συνθήκην ἔθεντο πρὸς αὐτόν,
ὅτι ἄξιοί εἰσιν τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος εἶναι.

destruction is not in them, neither does Hades have a throne on earth. For righteousness is immortal.
But with their hands and words, the ungodly beckoned Death. Considering Death their lover, they pined away for him and made a pact with him, for they are worthy of his lot.

The author of *Wisdom* begins his treatise with three imperatives addressed to the judges of the earth. He urges them to love righteousness,[1] to think of the Lord and to seek him. In the following verses, the author provides the reasons for these imperatives by discussing the inescapable judgment that results from disobeying these commands; one can either seek righteousness or find the hand of Justice.[2]

In v. 12, the author states one last imperative,[3] "Do not be zealous for death and do not bring on destruction by your own hands"—followed by the reason—"God did not make death nor does he delight in destruction." The basis for this command is that death and destruction are opposed to the creation and nature of God; the sage states that the former did not include a trace of destruction, while the latter is absent of death (ἀθάνατος).[4]

In order to distinguish the origin of wickedness in human history from the origin of goodness in divine creation,[5] *Wisdom* proclaims that God "created all things to exist" and that "the origins[6] of the cosmos are wholesome";[7] and on

1 For a more detailed discussion of δικαιοσύνη in *Wisdom* see Helmut Engel, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk GmbH, 1998), 58-60 and as a *Leitmotif* in the book, see Frederick Raurell, "From ΔΙΚΑΙΟΞΥΝΗ to ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΑ," in *Treasures of Wisdom: Festschrift for M. Gilbert*, ed. N. Calduch-Benages (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999), 330-349.

2 See chapter 7.

3 The next imperative does not occur until 6.12.

4 For *Wisdom*, ἀθάνατος "is not the inherit indestructibility of the soul, as Platonic tradition conceived it, but rather a state of eternal, blessed communion with God and his saints," [James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and Its Consequences* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 62]. For the influence of Isaiah upon this phrase, see Patrick William Skehan, *Studies in Israelite Poetry and Wisdom* (Washington, DC: Catholic Biblical Association, 1971), 151. The Sixtine Vulgate and the Complutensian add: *iniustitia autem mortis acquisition est,* ("But injustice is the very attainment of death"). Although this phrase does not occur in any of the extant Greek manuscripts and in very few other manuscripts, this idea is surely suggested by the author. That unrighteousness leads to death in contrast to righteousness is explicit in the following verses.

5 D. Georgi correctly concludes that vv. 13-15 "sind schriftgelehrte Modifikation des Skopus von Gen 1-3." [Dieter Georgi, *Weisheit Salomos*, 4 ed. (Gutersloh: Gerd Mohn, 1980), 404].

6 See Gregg who infers that this refers to "all the races of creatures in the world" as supported by the Vulgate's translation—*nationes terrae.* Gregg believes this points to the fact that "herbs are not by nature poisonous, nor wild beasts destructive, but human sin has caused a general marring of the divine scheme," [J.A.F. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), 8]. According to Clarke, this view is in line with the

the other side of this parallelism, God did not design creation with any inclination towards death and decay.[8]

With this said, the author introduces the familiar[9] personification of Death.[10] According to Larcher, the sage records a progression here: even though God's creation did not include a throne for Hades,[11] the fools invited Death in as a guest, considered him a friend and then fell in love with him. Wanting to secure the relationship, the fools proceed to make a lasting covenant with their lover.[12]

The sage structures this section to stress the fools' absurd action of summoning Death and their cooperation with him over against the role of God and the nature of his Creation. Scholars have tended to neglect the antithetical parallels of vv. 13-15 and v. 16 which set Death over against God. For example, *Wisdom* places God as the subject of vv.13-14, followed by a conclusion about the character of God in v.15. In contrast, the sage places the

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rabbinic idea that the "*creative forces* only became harmful when Adam lost his immortality by sin and with the Fall, the earth produced poisonous insects and reptiles," [Ernest G. Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 21].

7 Or "self-preserving" (σωτήριος). For a discussion of this word, see David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979), 108-109; Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 68; J.J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 187; and H.G Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 1751.

8 Cf. Michael Kolarcik, "Creation and Salvation in the Book of Wisdom," in *Creation in the Biblical Traditions*, ed. Richard J. Clifford and John J. Collins (Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1992), 100.

9 The first personification of Death occurs in the LXX of Ex. 5.3; there Israel entreats Pharaoh to allow them to go worship Yahweh, or Death (instead of Yahweh as in the MT) may meet them face to face. Death and Hades are mentioned together in Ps 48.15 (49.14); cf. Ps. 54.16 (55.15). Job actually gives voice to Death as he claims to have heard of Sophia's fame (28.21. Cf.18.13; 30.23). In *Ps. Sol* 15.7, Death runs away like a defeated soldier. Whereas the MT version of Isa 25.8 promises that the Lord will swallow up death forever, the LXX version presents Death as an agent who conquers and consumes. In Jer. 9.20, Death creeps in through the window and enters into the land to destroy the young. In 1 Cor. 15.26, Death is the last enemy of God. It is not until Rev. 20.13-14 that Death dies as he is thrown into the lake of fire, the second death. The personification of Death was also common in other Hellenistic writings—the most developed example is that of *Alcestis*. One of the most relevant texts is 1 Enoch 69.8,11: "Death proceeds against the people who dwell upon the earth, from that day forevermore…for indeed human beings were not created but to be like angels, permanently to maintain pure and righteous lives. Death, which destroys all things, would have not touched them, had it not been through their knowledge by which they shall perish; Death is now eating us by means of this power," [Translation by E. Isaac, "1 Enoch," in *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth (New York: Doubleday, 1983), 48].

10 Although Death is not the subject of an action verb here, the language clearly personifies him, especially in light of the parallel passage in Wis. 2.23-24.

11 Collins find similarities between the kingdom of Hades and statements about Belial in the DSS, [Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 189].

12 Chrysostome Larcher, *Le Livre de la Sagesse*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Paris: Gabalda, 1983), 207.

ungodly as the subject of v.16, followed by a conclusion concerning the relationship of the fools with Death. This can be seen in our following illustration:

A: God did not make death (1.13).

B: The ungodly summoned Death (1.16).

A: God does not delight in destruction (1.13).

B: The ungodly pine after Death (1.16).

A: God created all things with the intention of life (1.13).

B: The ungodly made a covenant with Death (1.16).

A: God's righteousness is deathless (1.15).

B: The ungodly are worthy of Death (1.16).

Along with these parallelisms, the sage makes the invitation to Death even more emphatic by including a *hendiadys,* "by their hands and words."[13] According to Larcher, such a phrase renders the same meaning as the phrase "corps et âme."[14] Gregg, however, sees this phrase as an exoneration of God's role and connects it with Philo's statement that*,* "Moses says it is not God who is the author of evils, but our own hands."[15] What these scholars have tended to miss are the ethical connotations implied by "hands and words." For example, "hands" foreshadow wicked deeds such as the murder of the godly in *Wisdom* 2 and "words" refer back to the slander and grumbling previously mentioned in *Wisdom* 1. In fact, this phrase parallels vv. 11-12 where the author warns against words that destroy and against the works of hands that bring on death.

Adding to the absurdity, the fools not only called out for Death, they also pined (τήκω)[16] for him as one would a paramour; in fact, they even consider him their lover (φίλος). By personifying Death and by connecting φίλος with τήκω, the sage depicts a strong intimacy between the fools and personified evil.[17] Michael Tait even argues that in light of the verb, ἐπισπᾶσθε, one could translate v. 12 as "Do not copulate with Destruction."[18]

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13 Cf. Yehoshua Amir, "The Figure of Death in the 'Book of Wisdom'," *JJS* 30 (1979), 163. John Geyer thinks this phrase simply illustrates the fools hailing Death with their hands and voices, [John Geyer, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (London: SCM Press, 1963), 61]. According to Harrington, it foreshadows the discussion of idolatry in chapters 13-15, [Daniel J. Harrington, *Invitation to the Apocrypha* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 58].

14 Larcher, *Sagesse*, 208.

15 Philo *Det. 32;* Gregg, *Wisdom*, 7.

16 Τήκω can be used as a metaphor for sexual desire [Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1787]. According to Larcher, "pining away" language was characteristic of Alexandrian poetry [Larcher, *Sagesse*, 207].

17 A similar idea occurs in Prov. 8.36b where Lady Wisdom concludes, καὶ οἱ μισοῦντές με ἀγαπῶσιν θάνατον. For the argument that the sage refers to an actual wedding contract in this passage, see A.T.S. Goodrick, *The Book of Wisdom* (London: Rivingtons, 1913), 99. Amir points to the similarities with the Qumran Literature *War* 13.12; 15.9-10; 17.4, where the wicked desire Beliya'al [Amir, "Death," 169]. Cf. *Apoc. of Abr. 23:71* where God made the

Moreover, scholars have not yet mentioned that the sage utilises language here which resembles the popular Hellenistic motif of *paraclausithyron.* Within this form, a lustful lover, having been locked out, is separated from the person with whom they long to be united. So also here, the wicked are excluded from the object of their desire, Death. Like the excluded lovers in the motif, the ungodly in *Wisdom* pine away for and summon their lover.[19] These allusions to an illicit affair serve as a foil for the sexual imagery the sage will later employ with Lady Wisdom and the wise.[20]

Not only do the fools pine for Death, they go so far as to make a covenant with him, for the simple reason that they are worthy of his lot.[21] In other words, the fools get what they deserve. This covenant that they receive is not a treaty between equals, but rather a treaty in which one party voluntarily gives themselves over to the other party.[22] Such a death-pact relates closely to Isa. 28.15, which most likely serves as his primary source for the sage's personification of Death.[23]

There, the apostate rulers proclaim "let us make a covenant with Hades and a pact with Death."[24] Isaiah depicts these ungodly rulers of Jerusalem as having no fear of judgment due to a perceived refuge in their pact with Death.[25] Instead, the apostate Jews wear fading-wreaths as they feast until they become so intoxicated that there is not one spot on their tables left unstained

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Devil to be beloved by the wicked. Philo also employs this idea of pining away in the discussion of Hedone and Virtue (*Gig.* 10.44). Rather than answering the summons of Hedone, Philo implores his soul to turn away from her and instead to gaze upon the genuine beauty of Virtue until a yearning for her melts in you.

18 Michael Tait, "CRUDITÉS À LA ANGLAISE," in *What is it that the Scripture says?* (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 86.

19 For more on this, see J. R. Dodson, "Locked-Out Lovers," *JSP* 16, no. 3 (2007), 35-50.

20 See Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 39-40.

21 Literally: ὅτι ἄξιοί εἰσιν τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος εἶναι. The theme of both the ungodly and godly being worthy of their lot is a vital point for the sage and recurs often in the book. For statements concerning the worth of the ungodly see 1.16, 12.26, 16.9, 18.4, 19.4. Statements of worth for the godly are referred to in 3.5, 6.16, 9.12, and 12.7. These exact implications may depend on whether one reads ὁτι in v. 16 as referring primarily to the cause or to the result. For the use of ὁτι as cause or result, see Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, and F. Wilber Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* Second ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press 1979), 588-589.

22 Larcher, *Sagesse*, 208: "non un traité conclu entre parties égales et d'un commun accord, mais un pacte decidé par celui qui se livre volontairement à un autre."

23 "On notera en particulier Is. XXVIII, 15, source immediate de notre texte," ibid. Cf. Philo, *Leg. All.* 3.246, where Philo discusses a covenant made with Wickedness that results from the breaking of the command not to eat of the tree in Genesis 3.

24 Lit: ἐποιήσαμεν διαθήκην μετὰ τοῦ ᾅδου καὶ μετὰ τοῦ θανάτου συνθήκας κτλ. The following paragraphs argue for a very similar sense shared between the two texts. Cf. Geyer, *Wisdom*, 62 and Skehan, *Poetry*, 163-165.

25 Cf. Wis. 14.29, where the idol worshippers do not fear making false vows because their gods are false.

with vomit. All the while, however, God's impending storm moves to destroy their false refuge and trample their wreaths despite their covenant with Death. When the plumb line is dropped, only those believing in God's cornerstone shall not be put to shame.[26]

Similarly, in *Wisdom*, the fools' partnership with Death leads to divine judgment through the storm of personified Creation (see *Wisdom* 5). Therefore, the reference to the pact with Death, the image of God's impending judgment, and the fools' ignorance of this storm make Isaiah 28 the most probable reference.[27] However, the sage does not refer to apostate Jews alone; rather, he universalises the reference to refer to the wicked in general.[28] Furthermore, in Isaiah the deal is made as an escape from doom, whereas in *Wisdom* the treaty implies more of a love affair, where the fools actually "flirt avec la Mort."[29]

Through personification, the sage tells us several things about Death in this chapter: 1) Death is presented as an external force, which can be pursued and which comes upon people by their invitation. Therefore, 2) Death is something which can and should be avoided, since 3) Death is antithetical to God's creation and his character, and thus, 4) foreign to those who belong to God. This informs the reader that 5) one can be worthy of Death's lot.[30] In the following chapter, the sage gives the rest of the story about the role of Death as the emphasis of blame shifts from the fools' pact with Death to Death's partnership with the Devil.

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26 According to John Watts, Isaiah uses "Death pact" to refer to a covenant Jerusalem leaders made with either Assyria or Egypt. In return, their gods of death, Moth or Osiris respectively, guaranteed this pact. John D. W. Watts, *Isaiah 1-33*, WBC (Dallas, TX: Word, 1985), 369.

27 Other possible allusions exist as well, especially when connected to the foolish plans in the following chapter. Larcher discusses the influence of Anthony and Cleopatra's death pact on the Wisdom text [Larcher, *Sagesse*, 208; see also Monya McGlynn, *Divine Judgment and Divine Benevolence in the Book of Wisdom* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 58). Reese, on the other hand, sees this attitude of fools as a satire of Epicurean philosophy [Reese, *Hellenistic Influence,* 66-67]. Also, the assumptions of these fools sound similar to what one might find in Ecclesiastes, especially chap. 9. This has led some to even suggest that *Wisdom* is arguing against Qohelet, as an "Anti-Ecclesiastes," [C. H. H. Wright, *The Book of Koheleth* (London: 1883), 61], or against people who had misapplied the book to excuse their lifestyle [see Amir, "Death," 175-176. For an in depth discussion of the history of this argument see Skehan, *Poetry*, 214-236].

28 Cf. Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom and Creation* (Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1994), 299.

29 Larcher, *Sagesse*, 208.

30 Cf. Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 46-58.

2. The Entrance of Death through the Envy of the Devil (Wis. 2.23-24)

[23] ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἔκτισεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπ' ἀφθαρσίᾳ καὶ εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας ἀϊδιότητος ἐποίησεν αὐτόν· [24] φθόνῳ δὲ διαβόλου Θάνατος εἰσῆλθεν εἰς τὸν κόσμον, πειράζουσιν δὲ αὐτὸν οἱ τῆς ἐκείνου μερίδος ὄντες.	God created the man for incorruptibility and he made him to be the likeness of his own eternity; but through the envy of the Devil, Death entered into the cosmos, and those worthy of him experienced him.

In *Wisdom* 2, the sage begins by giving voice to the fools in order to make their wrong reasoning known[31]—"life is short and death is forever, therefore, we must eagerly make the most of what we have, for it is all we shall ever have." The emphasis on the brevity of life and the longevity of death in vv. 1-5 provides the basis for the resignation by the wicked merely to eat, drink, and be merry (vv. 6-9) and for the plan to persecute the godly (vv.10-20). Blinded by their wickedness, the fools were deceived by these wrong thoughts, a deception which led to the planning of the unholy actions discussed in 2.6-20.

As opposed to the assumptions of the fools, the fact is, the lives of humankind are not random. Rather, designing humanity in His own eternal image,[32] God created people not for ashes but for incorruptibility.[33] Physical death is not the end of humanity, at least not for the righteous; instead, there is the mystery and reward of God, which the wicked did not know, hope, or even regard.[34]

This passage parallels 1.13-16, and with it, forms an *inclusio* around the first speech of the wicked in 2.1-20.[35] As in 1.13-16, *Wisdom* sets two statements about the original intentions of God *vis à vis* His creation (2.23) in contrast to two statements about the current reality of creation (2.24). Rather than the righteousness of God and his general creation of the cosmos (1.13-

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31 See *prosopopoiia* above.

32 Lit: εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας ἀϊδιότητος. This is possibly to be understood similarly to the statement by Epicurus, which says that God's very nature is his impassibility and incorruptibility, and this is his "eternity," [Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 66].

33 According to Reese, the term ἀφθαρσία was either coined or elevated by Epicureanism. Arguing from the Sage's use of ἐπί, he claims that incorruption is "not man's goal but as the positive quality granted to his nature enabling him to enter into a special, personal relationship with his creator… not simply the acquisition of human effort, but a recompense that God gives to those loyal to him." The sage's goal here is to show how this gift was lost, namely, from the envy of the Devil (Ibid., 66-67).

34 This gift is none other than eternal life in the Lord. For more on the concept of immortality in *Wisdom*, see Harrington, *Invitation to the Apocrypha*, 75; and Lothar Ruppert, "Gerechte und Frevler (Gottlose) in Sap 1,1-6,21," in *Die Weisheit Salomos im Horizont Biblischer Theologie*, ed. Hans Hübner, Biblisch-Theologische Studien (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener, 1993), 1-54.

35 See John R. Levison, *Portraits of Adam in Early Judaism* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 50.

14), the sage focuses on the image of God and his creation of humankind here. In 1.13-14, God did not make death nor did he create a world with an inclination towards it; in 2.23-24, the Lord created humanity for incorruption (ἀϊδιότης) making him in the likeness of God's own eternity.

Therefore, just as God created all things for life in 1.13-16, God created all people for immortality in 2.23-24; just as creation was not meant for destruction, neither was humanity. The current condition is blamed on the entrance of Death with whom the wicked have partnered.[36] Both chapters conclude with a reference to the ungodly as part of Death's lot (μερίδος). The reference in 1.16 announces that the fools are worthy of that lot, while this verse indicates they belong to it.

In 2.24, the author introduces another character into the scenario, the Devil.[37] The sage informs the reader that Death entered into the world through the envy of the Devil (φθόνῳ…διαβόλου).[38] While Larcher sees Death as under immediate influence of the Devil,[39] Amir and Hayman[40] contend that Death is essentially the same figure as the Devil.[41] Furthermore, Larcher[42] and Giuseppe Scarpat conclude that the Devil is essentially the same figure as the serpent in Genesis 3.[43] The exact relationship and allusion are difficult to ascertain since the sage only provides the brief phrase, "through the envy of the Devil."

It is probable that the sage gets this idea of the Devil's envy from a related (if not the same) tradition as *Vita* 12.1, 13.3. There the envious Devil, after refusing to obey the command to worship the image of Yahweh (i.e. Adam) is

36 This is against the development in the Targums and Rabbinic literature which takes sin as "part of the essence of humanity instead of an entailment from the fall," [D.A. Carson, *Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981), 103].

37 Scarpat proposes that the sage paraphrases Sir. 15.14 (αὐτὸς ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐποίησεν ἄνθρωπον καὶ ἀφῆκεν αὐτὸν ἐν χειρὶ διαβουλίου αὐτοῦ), but that he replaces διαβουλίου with διάβολος [Giuseppe Scarpat, *Libro della Sapienza*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Brescia: Paideia, 1989), 163].

38 There is question, however, as to whether the Devil refers to a power (e.g. Satan) or an actual person (e.g. Cain). For arguments supporting the latter, see Engel, *Weisheit*; Gregg, *Wisdom*, 20-21; Geyer, *Wisdom*, 67; Levison, *Adam*, 51-52 and Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 121. Against the reading of Cain, see Karina Martin Hogan, "The Exegetical Background of the 'Ambiguity of Death' in the Wisdom of Solomon" *JSJ* 30, no. 1 (1991), 21 and Larcher, *Sagesse*, 271.

39 Larcher, *Sagesse*, 271.

40 "Mot/Death is promoted here into the Devil and on him is laid the responsibility for bringing death into existence [A.P. Hayman, "Mythology in the Wisdom of Solomon," *HTR* 30 (1999), 133 fn. 31].

41 Amir, "Death," 158-159. Amir says the sage mentions the Devil for the sake of rhetorical clarity (p. 161); cf. Goodrick, *Wisdom*, 99.

42 Larcher, *Sagesse*, 270.

43 Scarpat, *Sapienza*, 163. Scarpat reconstructs the thought here: the Devil envies Adam and Eve because they are destined to incorruption. Therefore, in an effort of revenge against God, the Devil corrupts humanity by causing them to envy and persecute the righteous (p. 166).

expelled from glory and proceeds to launch his attack on Eve, whose fall "wrought destruction and great wrath, which is death gaining rule over all our race," (*Apoc*. 14).[44] The sage does not explain this statement however. Perhaps he presumed his audience would be familiar which such a story, making an explanation superfluous. Moreover, the sage possibly sees a parallel between the fools who put to death the righteous son of God created in the divine image (Wis. 2.18-24) and this other story where the Devil sought to destroy Adam, the image of God and therefore made a way for Death to enter the world.

The discussion of creation, the phrase "image of God," as well as the possible connexion with the Devil and the serpent do argue for a Genesis 1-3 framework.[45] Although the sage draws from Genesis, he defines Death differently. In Genesis, death is not pictured as a power, but as a universal consequence of Adam and Eve's disobedience because it led to their expulsion from Eden and the Tree of Life within it.[46] The sage, on the other hand, depicts Death as a force which leads only the ungodly to eternal destruction.[47]

Whereas the sage presents the wicked as culprits in 1.16, here—by mentioning the Devil who is often associated with deceit and treachery—he presents them as victims as well. In v. 24, the sage places the fools on the other side of Death's entrance; it is not through the invitation of the wicked as in 1.16, but through the Devil that Death makes his way into the world. Then, the fools experience[48] Death.

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44 Translation by M.D. Johnson in James H. Charlesworth, ed., *The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, vol. 2 (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 277. The parallel passage in *Vita* 44 states that Eve brought transgression and sin into the world. Cf. the tradition where the serpent desired Eve, copulated with her, and sought to kill Adam so that he could have Eve for himself (e.g. *Apoc. Mos* xv-xxii; *4 Macc.* 18.6).

45 See Larcher, *Sagesse*, 267-268. Cf. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 11, who connects this with the motif of the gods' envy in Greek literature. Amir rejects both a Genesis 3 and 4 background; his conjecture that the sage pieces together his own mythology from a selection of scriptures (i.e. Isa. 5.18, Isa. 28.25, Prov. 8.36 and Job 17.4), seems forced [see Amir, "Death," 154-178]. One does not have to create a new setting from scriptures to explain how Death entered. The direct juxtaposition of the entrance of evil with creation and of the envy of the Devil with the image of God provides Eden as a natural setting for this event. The use of the plural pronouns does not, as Amir concludes, discount this setting. The sage reapplies the fall to evil people. Such an utilisation of Genesis 3 is not uncommon, (e.g. 2 Baruch 54.19, Rom. 1.18-32 and Rom. 5.12-21), and it is the preferred reading here as well. Even Amir later admits a relationship between the sage's mythology and the biblical framework, although he qualifies this relation as "loose" (p. 172).

46 Cf. Pierre Gibert, *Bible, myths et récits de commencement*, Parole de Dieu (Paris: Éd. du Seuil, 1986), 107].

47 Cf. Levison, *Portraits of Adam,* 52. For *Wisdom*, mortality seems not so much the result of sin, but a natural part of life for both godly and ungodly that leads either to ultimate life or death respectively. See A. M. Dubarle, "Le peche originel dans l'ecriture," *LD* 20 (1958), 90. Cf. also Shannon Burkes, "Wisdom and Apocalypticism in the Wisdom of Solomon," *HTR* 95, no. 1 (2002), 25 and Amir, "Death," 172.

48 Lit: πειράζουσιν αὐτόν. This phrase could have a wide variety of meanings. For example, it could mean 1) that the ungodly "experienced Death" or 2) that the fools "tried Death." This is

Once blame is placed on supra-human powers, such as the Devil, it is difficult to maintain human responsibility; instead people become pawns in a struggle between divine forces.[49] For this reason, Larcher concludes that v. 24 coincides with the progression in the Bible which moves away from blaming humanity to blaming supernatural causes instead.[50] Now, it is not so much that the fools are worthy of Death's lot as in 1.16, rather they simply belong to it. However, we shall argue below that this idea should not be seen as contradicting human responsibility but as complementing it.

In sum, through the personification in 2.24, the sage tells us several more things about Death: as in 1.16, Death is presented as an external force, but here 1) he is more of a partner with the Devil rather than the fools. Death not only contradicts God's general creation, 2) he directly contrasts with God's image in which God made humanity. After his entrance through the envy of the Devil, 3) the wicked experience Death because 4) they belong to his lot.

3. The Purposes for the Personification of Death

Within *Wisdom*, the personification of Death helps serve at least two purposes: 1) to distance God from the blame for death by placing responsibility elsewhere,[51] and 2) to motivate the audience to pursue Sophia instead.

To distance God from the problem of Death by placing blame elsewhere

In the ancient world there were those who claimed that both good and evil come from the Lord.[52] To such a claim, Ben Sira responds: "Never say that it

how Georgi takes it—he translates it "erproben"; although Georgi admits the possibility of "erfahren" in the footnote [Georgi, *Weisheit Salomos*, 409; See also Gregg, *Wisdom*, 2]. 3) Another possibility is that the phrase could mean that they "seduced death" (See Liddell and Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 1354). Such a reading would strengthen the parallel with 1.16. On the other hand, the Vulgate reads "*imitantur autem illum qui sunt ex parte illius*." Cf. J.P. Weisengoff, "Death and Immortality in the Book of Wisdom," *CBQ* 3 (1941), 124.

49 Neil Forsyth, *The Old Enemy: Satan & The Combat Myth* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987), 10.

50 Larcher, *Sagesse*, 271.

51 See the purpose of personification according to Whitman; personifications "expose the underlying principles of events," [J. Whitman, *Allegory: The Dynamics of an Ancient and Medieval Technique* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 22].

52 This idea can be seen in the Dead Sea Scrolls (DSS). For example, in 1QS 3-4, God created both the Angel of Darkness and the Angel of Truth. The former, along with its minions, attack the elect and cause them to fall into sin, but this all still falls within the will of God, who placed within humanity both the spirit of good and of evil. According to Alexander, in Qumran theology, "Divine agency is all" since it "paints a stark and bleak picture: the world and history are seen as a background between the forces of good and evil, with evil at present

was the Lord's fault that you fell away,"[53] and Socrates reasons: "We must wholly resist the notion that the author of good is also the author of evil."[54] However, the philosopher continues, "If God is not the author of evil, then we have got to find another author."[55] Such a pursuit to find another author and thereby "eliminate divine ultimacy in the area of evil" became characteristic of almost all Jewish intertestamental literature.[56] Sometimes these authors placed the blame on wicked humanity,[57] but it became increasingly popular for them to blame evil powers instead.[58] (We will discuss this further in chapter 13.)

Along these lines, scholars generally agree that the main goal of Wis. 1.12-16 and 2.21-24 is "to clear God of blame for human wickedness and its consequence,"[59] "to disassociate Death from God,"[60] and to hold that "the

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in the ascendant, but destined ultimately to be defeated and totally eliminated. Behind this conflict stands God, orchestrating in his mysterious wisdom the activities of both sides…He is the cosmic puppet-master who pulls everyone's strings…The good and the bad, men, angels, and demons act in the end only as agents of God's grand design," [Philip Alexander, "Predestination and Free Will in the Theology of the Dead Sea Scrolls," in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and His Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 48]. Cf. "The Babylonian Theodicy" (ANET, 601-604).

53 Sir. 15.11-12. Cf. Jas. 1.13-15.

54 Plato, *Rep*. II.379-380.

55 Ibid.

56 Carson, *Divine Sovereignty*, 202. According to Carson, the DSS are the exceptions which prove the rule.

57 E.g. Ben Sira, Baruch. See also Jam. 1.13-15.

58 Perhaps the best example of this is found in the *Book of Watchers*, where the angels are the originators of all evil (1 *Enoch* 6-8). Another striking example comes from Philo who distances God from the origin of evil by pointing to subordinate agents in *Op*. 75. There, Philo reasons that since God said in the beginning, "Let *us* make," clearly there were others with him. Therefore, whenever a person does good it is naturally credited to God; however, when a person does something evil, such acts must be attributed to those other subordinates who were there with God. In short, when people operate out of virtue, God gets the credit, but when the opposite occurs the subordinate agents receive the blame. With such a tactic, Philo reminds us of a father who when proud of his child says to the boy's mother, "That's my boy!" However, when frustrated with his child, the father says to the mother, "That's your son!"

Such a distancing of God from the work of evil by blaming evil powers can also be seen in the retelling of biblical events. For example, in 1 Chronicles, the author distances, if not totally removes, Yahweh from the blame of David's sin recorded in 2 Samuel 24: now, it is Satan, not God, who incites David to sin (1 Chron. 21.1). Similarly, the author of Jubilees replaces God with Mastema; rather than Yahweh, as in the original narratives, now it is the evil angel who prompts Abraham to slaughter Isaac in Gen. 22 and who seeks to kill Moses immediately after God had commissioned the patriarch to rescue Israel from Egypt in Exod. 4. There is also development from the original Job narrative to the rendition in the *Testament of Job*, where Satan attacks Job without first being prompted by Yahweh.

59 Hogan, "Ambiguity," 20. See also Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 190 and Goodrick, *Wisdom,* 98.

60 J.J. Collins, *Jewish Cult and Hellenistic Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 151.

dualistic nature of this world is not of God's making."[61] Scholars tend to see the sage as either placing the primary blame on humanity or on evil powers. For example, Gregg suggests that the sage makes the Devil the sole author of evil;[62] while Martinus de Boer concludes that the sage downplays or undercuts the role of evil powers,[63] A.T.S. Goodrick states that the underlying principle for the sage is "the absolute freewill of man."[64]

However, as we place side by side the passages where Death is personified, we see that in 1.12-16 the sage stresses the responsibility of evil humanity while in 2.21-24 he underlines the active role of Death and the Devil. Yet, even in this latter passage, the sage does not release the fools from blame, since he had just concluded in v. 21 that the ungodly were blinded by their own wickedness (ἡ κακία αὐτῶν).[65] In light of 2.21 and the parallel in 1.16 it seems here that although the fools are not directly blamed for bringing Death into the world, their own pursuits lead them to experience Death and belong to him. Thus, Death and the Devil's influence in *Wisdom* still do not ultimately relieve these people from blame.

Therefore, rather than merely stressing the responsibility of extra divine causes or humanity alone, the sage employs a personification both to emphasise the responsibility of the fools who made a pact with Death and of the Devil who let Death into the world.[66] Moreover, it is not, as Geyer suggests, that *Wisdom* is uncertain whether Death entered through humanity or through the Devil.[67] Rather, the sage is certain that death entered through them both.[68]

In sum, *Wisdom* uses personification to depict humanity and external forces of evil as mutually responsible for the current condition of the world. Therefore, by vividly portraying, by amplifying[69] the absurd relationship between the wicked and Death (*reductio ad absurdum),* and by clarifying the role of Death and the Devil, the personification serves not only to argue that

61 Amir, "Death," 160.

62 Gregg, *Wisdom*, 23. Gregg claims the sage does this because —'the idea of God having anything to do with evil violated divine transcendence according to the Alexandrian mind.' See also Hayman, "Mythology," 133 and Amir, "Death," 160.

63 Martinus C. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 90.

64 Goodrick, *Wisdom*, 98.

65 Cf. Gregg, *Wisdom*, 20-21 and Joseph Reider, *The Book of Wisdom* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), 69.

66 Contra Hayman, "Mythology," 136.

67 Geyer, *Wisdom*, 43.

68 This idea of mutual blame is found in 1 Enoch as well, see G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 46. So also, in 2 *Enoch* 30.14-15, God gives humanity freewill in order to test their love for him, but in 31.6, the Devil thought up a scheme against Adam, entered Eden, and corrupted Eve so that it is not the free choice of humanity which ruins the day as much as it is the deception of the Devil.

69 See *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* IV.LIII.66 above.

God is blameless, but also, to say whose blame it is—evil people *and* external forces of evil, the fool's invitation to Death *and* the envy of the Devil.

To motivate the audience to avoid evil and to seek righteousness

Since Death is against the nature and creation of God and since those who cooperate with Death are idiots who will be utterly destroyed, through the personification, the reader would be motivated to flee from Death and embrace righteousness instead, thereby supporting the imperatives in v. 1 to seek righteousness and v. 12 to refuse Death. Whereas God's righteousness is absent of death, unrighteousness is the very attainment of Death, the place where Hades has his throne. Therefore, the audience should avoid evil and seek godliness at all costs. (We will discuss this further in chapter 7.)

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen that the sage personifies Death and places his entrance through the invitation of the wicked and the envy of the Devil in juxtaposition with the purity of God's righteousness and creation. By personifying Death, the sage is able to stress the absurdity of pursuing a relationship with him by presenting Death as an illicit lover and covenant partner.

Furthermore, by personifying Death as its own agent who enters through the Devil, the sage is able to remove God from the blame of death in the world. Such a discourse would serve to exonerate the God of Israel, but also (with affective impact) to strengthen the resolve of the faithful, to call back those wavering in the faith to seek righteousness and to castigate those who already had abandoned the Lord by seeking Death. In short, the personification serves as an "orientation for faith and action."[70]

Once we have covered the other personifications in *Wisdom*, we shall compare personified Death and its role to them. Now, we turn to the personification of Creation.

70 See the purposes for Personification in Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt* (Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1991), 27.

Chapter 4

The Personification of Creation in *Wisdom*

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we discussed how the sage uses personification to describe the partnership of the impious with Death and his ungodly work with the Devil in order to contrast such an unnatural relationship and devious strategy with God's wholesome plan for the cosmos. This is not all the sage has to say about the world however. Instead, Creation itself becomes a key player in the rest of the book.

In fact, in its cosmology, *Wisdom* "interprets the entire spectrum of history: creation, exodus, and the ultimate judgment,"[1] so that even salvation is partially "understood as God's effort to bring humanity to the point of realizing the original intentions at creation."[2] For the sage, creation is a "single living organism,"[3] through which humanity encounters God,[4] and by which God judges humanity. Two principles capture the essence of *Wisdom*'s creation theology. First, as we saw in the last chapter, the world was created without evil. Second, Creation has benefited the righteous and punished the wicked in the past and shall do so again in the future.[5] The sage begins the book with a discussion of the former and ends the book with the theme of the latter.

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1 Michael Kolarcik, "Creation and Salvation in the Book of Wisdom," in *Creation in the Biblical Traditions*, ed. Richard J. Clifford and John J. Collins (Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1992), 107. Cf. J.J. Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation: Jewish Wisdom and Apocalyptic in the Hellenistic Age," *HR* 17 (1977), 121-142.

2 Kolarcik, "Creation and Salvation," 103.

3 James M. Reese, *The Book of Wisdom, Song of Songs* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983), 58. According to Reese, this was a common Hellenistic idea. Cf. S. Cheon, *The Exodus Story in the Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 148-149.

4 Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation: Jewish Wisdom and Apocalyptic in the Hellenistic Age," 128. Cf. Markus Bockmuehl, *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 87-111.

5 See Kolarcik, "Creation and Salvation," 101. Cf. Crenshaw, who argues that this use of creation is found in Sirach [James L. Crenshaw, "The problem of Theodicy in Sirach: On Human Bondage," *JBL* (1975), 47-64].

These two themes are most characteristic of *Wisdom*,[6] and follow the idea that "for the Jew there was no conception of a physical, non-moral world; the universe was in league with the righteous"[7] on the one hand but an enemy and source of terror for the wicked on the other.[8] Within the sage's cosmology, then, he does not divorce salvation and judgment from the work of creation; instead, salvation and judgment are "necessary consequences of the way the world is ordered."[9] What scholars have not mentioned is that in order to demonstrate Creation's service for the righteous against the impious, the sage personifies it.[10]

In three major passages, the sage depicts Creation as the protector of the righteous and punisher of the wicked. The most developed Creation personification occurs in *Wisdom* 5, where Creation as a cosmic warrior battles against the wicked. In *Wisdom* 16, Cosmos is the defender of the righteous[11] and servant of the Lord,[12] who stretches out to punish the unrighteous and withdraws to provide for the people of God (16.17, 24); and in *Wisdom* 19, the World is the protector of the pious.

We shall now discuss these passages in turn—Creation as a cosmic warrior (1), as the defender of Israel (2), and as the provider for the pious (3), followed by a discussion of the purposes for the personification (4). It will be argued that the sage's personification of Creation goes beyond other personifications of the World, in that Creation in *Wisdom* is exalted to and identified as the champion of Israel who fights and serves beside God as his agent rather than just as his tool.

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6 Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 143. See also Helmut Engel, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk GmbH, 1998), 296.

7 J.A.F. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), 159.

8 Monya McGlynn, *Divine Judgment and Divine Benevolence in the Book of Wisdom* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 82.

9 Collins, "Cosmos and Salvation: Jewish Wisdom and Apocalyptic in the Hellenistic Age," 126.

10 In this work, we will refer to the sage's reference to both κτίσις and κόσμος as Creation since he uses these terms interchangeably. E.g. the reference to Cosmos in Wis. 5.20b is a restatement, and one might add expansion, of the reference to *Ktisis* in Wis. 5.17b [Engel, *Weisheit*, 109]. See also A.T.S. Goodrick, *The Book of Wisdom* (London: Rivingtons, 1913), 329.

11 Lit: ὑπέρμαχος γὰρ ὁ κόσμος ἐστὶν δικαίων.

12 Lit: ἡ γὰρ κτίσις σοὶ τῷ ποιήσαντι ὑπηρετοῦσὰ.

1. The World against the Wicked (Wis. 5.20-23)

[20] συνεκπολεμήσει δὲ αὐτῷ ὁ κόσμος ἐπὶ τοὺς παράφρονας.	And the Cosmos will fight beside him against the deranged ones.
[21] πορεύσονται εὔστοχοι βολίδες ἀστραπῶν καὶ ὡς ἀπὸ εὐκύκλου τόξου τῶν νεφῶν ἐπὶ σκοπὸν ἁλοῦνται,	21: As from a well-rounded bow, accurate missiles of lightning will proceed, leaping from the clouds toward their mark,
[22] καὶ ἐκ πετροβόλου θυμοῦ πλήρεις ῥιφήσονται χάλαζαι·	22: And hail stones full of wrath will be thrown from a catapult;
ἀγανακτήσει κατ' αὐτῶν ὕδωρ θαλάσσης, ποταμοὶ δὲ συγκλύσουσιν ἀποτόμως·	The Water of the sea shall be indignant against them, and rivers, falling from sheer heights, shall wash over them.
[23] ἀντιστήσεται αὐτοῖς πνεῦμα δυνάμεως καὶ ὡς λαῖλαψ ἐκλικμήσει αὐτούς·	23: A Wind of power shall oppose them sifting them like a storm.

In *Wisdom* 5, the sage portrays the end of the wicked at the final visitation of God in stark contrast to the reward for the righteous at that event. In order to make this contrast, the author employs a number of rhetorical devices (e.g. *prosopopoiia*, anthropomorphism, metaphor and personification). In vv. 3-13, the sage puts words in the mouths of the ungodly to demonstrate their utter horror at the revelation of the righteous. After a brief reminder of the future reward for the godly, the sage presents God as the protector of and warrior for the wise, as the Lord arms himself with zeal,[13] righteousness, judgment, holiness, wrath and Creation (κτίσις).

Alongside of this anthropomorphism, the author personifies Cosmos[14] with its constituent parts as a warrior who will rise up at God's visitation to fight beside (συνεκπολεμήσει)[15] God and to execute justice upon the fools who invited Death into it. Although these impious ones used Creation for their pleasure,[16] in the end, with a smack of poetic justice, God will employ her for wrath against them. Lightning becomes an agent that leaps from the

13 See Larcher who, following textual variants, makes "Zeal" the personified subject rather than God [Chrysostome Larcher, *Le Livre de la Sagesse*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Paris: Gabalda, 1983), 386-387].

14 In contrast to the rest of the LXX which uses this word to refer to adornment, the sage uses it 16 times where it has the sense of universe [James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and Its Consequences* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 5].

15 The only other occurrences of this verb in the LXX are in Deut. 1.30, 20.4, where it is said that God will fight beside Israel.

16 Wis. 2.6.

clouds;[17] angry balls of hail are cast from catapults; the indignant[18] sea and river rage against and pour over the fools, while the wind opposes them and sifts them like a storm.[19]

Various backgrounds have been proposed for this passage. With the depiction of Yahweh adorning himself as a warrior to repay his enemies,[20] with the discussion of reward for the righteous and punishment for the wicked, as well as the sage's tendency to draw from Isaiah,[21] Armin Schmitt concludes that Isa. 59.16-20 should be seen as the background to this text.[22] Noting that the LXX of Isa. 59.17 does not contain the word "zeal," Engel posits Isa. 42.13 as an additional background—"The Lord God of powers will go forth and shatter the battle, and with strength, he will stir up zeal and cry out against his enemies."[23] While these passages explain the possible backgrounds for the motif of God arming himself for battle, they do not fully explain the backgrounds for Creation as a warrior beside him. We shall now look at possible sources for the latter.

The sage's depiction of Creation and its constitute parts as an army follows the OT portrayal of God as a weapon-wielding warrior.[24] Often in these portrayals, God, in the imagery of a storm, uses nature for his weapons: he casts hailstones causing the sun to stand still (Joshua 10), and he thunders from heaven, shooting arrows of lightning to rout his enemies (2 Sam.

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17 "Like arrows from a bow": according to Goodrick, this is an allusion to a rainbow: "The token of forgiveness (Gen 9.13) is now turned into a weapon of destruction," (Goodrick, *Wisdom*,165); "Ce signe du pardon et de la fidélité divines deviendrait un instrument de colère, dirigé contre les impies," [Chrysostome Larcher, *Le Livre de La Sagesse*, 3 vols., vol. 2 (Paris: Gabalda, 1984), 394]. According to Larcher, the sage wants to specify that the clouds also have a role as they transform from a bow that shoots lightning into a catapult that tosses hail (pp. 394-395). See also Gregg, *Wisdom*, 53; Joseph Reider, *The Book of Wisdom* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), 98.

18 ἀγανακτέω is most often used for people in the LXX and NT (e.g. Wis. 12:27; Matt. 20:24; 21:15; 26:8; Mark 10:14, 41; 14:4; Luke 13:14; cf. 4 Macc. 4:21 where ἡ θεία δίκη becomes indignant.

19 It is possible that this refers to God's breath rather than wind and that the sage moves from the personification of nature back to God's role in the battle [see Larcher, *Sagesse*, 396 and Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 59]. Cf. Matt. 7.24-27.

20 Cf. Homer, *Iliad*, V.731-750; 844-845.

21 See Patrick William Skehan, "Isaiah and the Teaching of the Book of Wisdom," *CBQ* 2 (1940), 289-299.

22 Armin Schmitt, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Würzburg: Verlag, 1989), 36.

23 See Engel, *Weisheit*, 108.

24 Miriam sings in Ex. 15.3 that the Lord is a man of war, who, according to Moses, fights for Israel (Deut. 1.30, 20.4). The Psalmist warns the unrepentant that God has sharpened his sword and bent his bow (Ps. 7.12-13), while in Zechariah, God promises the godly that he will use Judah as his bow and Zion as his sword against the Greeks (Zech. 9.13-14). Cf. Psalm 7.12; 18.15-16; Ezek. 21.9. Collins traces the image of God as Divine Warrior back to "the storm-theophany of Baal in Canaanite texts of the second millennium," [J.J. Collins, *Jewish Cult and Hellenistic Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 152].

22.15).[25] Similarly, Philo and Josephus depict the elements of the universe as God's weapons against the ungodly.[26]

Although scholars tend to see the personification of Creation in *Wisdom* as simply a parallel of these passages, the stress here is not so much on God as the divine warrior—he only puts on his armour—nor is it upon nature as God's weapon.[27] Instead, in the emphasis, the battle belongs to Creation.[28] The parts of nature as personified agents of warfare, although less familiar, do have a few parallels in the OT and other Jewish writings. For example, Deborah sings of the stars and the river Kishon fighting the kings of Canaan (Judg. 5.20-21), and the Earth opens its mouth and swallows Korah and his company (Num. 16.32).[29]

This follows the development of the personification of nature and its parts in later Jewish writings where they are occasionally employed in discussions of an eschatological judgment day.[30] The idea of the elements fighting against the wicked appears in Greek literature as well.[31] For example, in *Empedocles* B.115, the air chases the wicked into the Sea, which vomits them back upon the Earth, only for the Earth to drive them to Sun for destruction.[32]

What is most relevant here is that later in the book, the sage draws from and exaggerates the Exodus.[33] For this reason, Kolarcik concludes that this passage in *Wisdom* 5 alludes to the Exodus events.[34] More specifically, there are similarities in this passage with the seventh plague in Ex. 9.23-24, where the Lord with battle cries sends hail and flaming fire. So also, the reference in

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25 Larcher focuses on two of these passages wherein this motif occurs as the sage's source: 'the author remembers Hab. 3.11 and Zech. 9.14 to illuminate the terrifying manner of God's judgment,' [Larcher, *Sagesse*, 393]. For the differences between the sage's "apocalyptic judgment" scenes and others, see Collins, *Jewish Cult*, 151-158.

26 Philo, *Mos*. 1.96; 2.53 and Josephus *Ant*. II.13.292.

27 Cf. 16.16.

28 See also Logos, Dike, et. al.

29 Cf. Genesis 4 where God promises Cain that the earth will resist him. Although the sage later discusses the narrative immediately following Korah's rebellion, he does not refer to or extend this personification of earth. Further, Habakkuk does personify the mountains, the deep, the sun and the moon; however, he depicts them more as spectators rather than agents of God's wrath (Hab. 3.10-15). Cf. 4 Macc. 17.14.

30 E.g. Sir. 39.28-31; 1 Enoch 7.6 and 100.10-13.

31 For a detailed list, see David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979), 149.

32 Ibid.

33 See Cheon, *Exodus*, 114.

34 Kolarcik, *Creation and Salvation*, 101. He also sees this as an allusion to the original creation overcoming chaos. Cf. Pierre Beauchamp, "Le Salut corporel des justes et la conclusion du livre de la Sagesse," *Biblica* 45 (1964), 491-526.

Wisdom to the seas raging and rivers overwhelming would naturally conjure up images of the Red Sea event to a Jewish audience.[35]

Although none of these parallels personifies κτίσις or κόσμος specifically, it is from this rich background that the sage draws. Again, what scholars have not tended to bring out, however, is that rather than the parts of nature as weapons or soldiers of God, the sage goes on in the following chapters to exalt Creation as the champion, servant,[36] provider and protector[37] of the righteous, roles usually reserved for God alone. The sage's personification here in *Wisdom* 5 begins to help us understand why he refers to the Cosmos as the ὑπέρμαχος:[38] a title only given to God in its other references in the LXX.[39] This role of Creation is underlined in the other two passages where the World is personified.

2. Creation as Defender of Israel and Destroyer of Egypt (Wis. 16.15-29)

For *Wisdom*, Creation's activity at the future apocalypse is founded upon its past activity in the Exodus. In *Wisdom* 1-6, the sage places the fools in juxtaposition with the righteous; in *Wisdom* 10-19, the sage places the foolish Egyptians over against righteous Israel.[40] The critical role Creation had played in the Exodus event dictates the role it will play at the visitation of God. Whereas in *Wisdom* 5 the sage personified Creation in respect to the latter, in 16.15-29 and 19.6-22, he personifies Creation and discusses its role in the former event, the Exodus.[41]

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35 Cf. Engel, *Weisheit*, 108; Goodrick, *Wisdom*, 166; McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 197. Although Larcher agrees that there is an allusion to the Red Sea event, he goes so far as to say the sage also alludes to the great deluge in order to promise a new flood [Larcher, *Sagesse*, 395].

36 Both the noun ὑπηρέτης and the verb ὑπηρετέω are only used in reference to humans in the LXX and the New Testament; however, the sage only employs the verb in relation to Creation (16.21, 24, 25; 19.6).

37 Cf. Rev. 12.16.

38 E.g. 2 Macc. 8.36, 14.34; cf. Wis. 10.20. The verb form is used only once in the LXX (1 Macc. 16.3) and never in the NT.

39 We use LXX for the lack of a better term. By LXX, we mean the Greek Old Testament as edited by Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: Privilegierte Württembergische Bibelanstalt). We realise that Rahlfs's published version was not around for the sage to access.

40 The sage also occasionally refers to the Canaanites.

41 Cf. Wis. 17.9.

In 16.15-29, the sage writes:

15 τὴν δὲ σὴν χεῖρα φυγεῖν ἀδύνατόν ἐστιν·
16 ἀρνούμενοι γάρ σε εἰδέναι ἀσεβεῖς
ἐν ἰσχύι βραχίονός σου ἐμαστιγώθησαν
ξένοις ὑετοῖς καὶ χαλάζαις καὶ ὄμβροις
διωκόμενοι ἀπαραιτήτοις καὶ πυρὶ
καταναλισκόμενοι.
17 τὸ γὰρ παραδοξότατον, ἐν τῷ πάντα
σβεννύντι ὕδατι πλεῖον ἐνήργει τὸ πῦρ,
ὑπέρμαχος γὰρ ὁ κόσμος ἐστὶν δικαίων·
18 ποτὲ μὲν γὰρ ἡμεροῦτο φλόξ, ἵνα μὴ
καταφλέξῃ τὰ ἐπ' ἀσεβεῖς ἀπεσταλμένα ζῷα,
ἀλλ' αὐτοὶ βλέποντες εἰδῶσιν ὅτι θεοῦ
κρίσει ἐλαύνονται·
19 ποτὲ δὲ καὶ μεταξὺ Ὕδατος ὑπὲρ τὴν πυρὸς
δύναμιν φλέγει, ἵνα ἀδίκου γῆς γενήματα
διαφθείρῃ.
20 ἀνθ' ὧν ἀγγέλων τροφὴν ἐψώμισας τὸν
λαόν σου καὶ ἕτοιμον ἄρτον ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ
παρέσχες αὐτοῖς ἀκοπιάτως πᾶσαν ἡδονὴν
ἰσχύοντα καὶ πρὸς πᾶσαν ἁρμόνιον γεῦσιν·
21 ἡ μὲν γὰρ ὑπόστασίς σου τὴν σὴν πρὸς
τέκνα ἐνεφάνιζεν γλυκύτητα,
τῇ δὲ τοῦ προσφερομένου ἐπιθυμίᾳ ὑπηρετῶν
πρὸς ὅ τις ἐβούλετο μετεκιρνᾶτο.
22 χιὼν δὲ καὶ κρύσταλλος ὑπέμεινε πῦρ καὶ
οὐκ ἐτήκετο, ἵνα γνῶσιν ὅτι τοὺς τῶν
ἐχθρῶν καρποὺς κατέφθειρε πῦρ φλεγόμενον
ἐν τῇ χαλάζῃ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὑετοῖς
διαστράπτον·
23 τοῦτο πάλιν δ' ἵνα τραφῶσιν δίκαιοι, καὶ
τῆς ἰδίας ἐπιλέλησται δυνάμεως.
24 ἡ γὰρ κτίσις σοὶ τῷ ποιήσαντι ὑπηρετοῦσα
ἐπιτείνεται εἰς κόλασιν κατὰ τῶν ἀδίκων
καὶ ἀνίεται εἰς εὐεργεσίαν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἐπὶ σοὶ
πεποιθότων.
25 διὰ τοῦτο καὶ τότε εἰς πάντα
μεταλλευομένη
τῇ παντοτρόφῳ σου δωρεᾷ ὑπηρέτει
πρὸς τὴν τῶν δεομένων θέλησιν,
26 ἵνα μάθωσιν οἱ υἱοί σου οὓς ἠγάπησας·,
κύριε, ὅτι οὐχ αἱ γενέσεις τῶν καρπῶν
τρέφουσιν ἄνθρωπον,
ἀλλὰ τὸ ῥῆμά σου τοὺς σοὶ πιστεύοντας
διατηρεῖ.
27 τὸ γὰρ ὑπὸ πυρὸς μὴ φθειρόμενον ἁπλῶς
ὑπὸ βραχείας ἀκτῖνος ἡλίου θερμαινόμενον
ἐτήκετο,
28 ὅπως γνωστὸν ᾖ ὅτι δεῖ φθάνειν τὸν
ἥλιον ἐπ' εὐχαριστίαν σου καὶ πρὸς
ἀνατολὴν φωτὸς ἐντυγχάνειν σοι·
29 ἀχαρίστου γὰρ ἐλπὶς ὡς χειμέριος πάχνη
τακήσεται καὶ ῥυήσεται ὡς ὕδωρ ἄχρηστον.

15: But it is impossible to flee from your hand;
16: For the ungodly, refusing to know you were scourged by the might of your arm, persecuted by strange rains, hailstones and irresistible thunderstorms, and consumed with fire.
17: For most incredible of all, in the midst of the all-extinguishing water, the fire burned even more,
for the Cosmos is the defender of the righteous;
18: For on one occasion, the flame was tamed, so that it would not consume the creatures which were sent upon the ungodly. Rather, beholding this phenomenon, they would see that they were being persecuted by the judgment of God.
19: But at another time, in the midst of water, the flame blazed more than the power of fire in order to destroy utterly the harvest from the land of the unrighteous.
20: On the other hand, you fed your people with the food of angels and prepared for them bread from heaven without their even having to labour for it,
food able to provide every pleasure for every harmonious taste;
21: For your substance manifests sweetness to your children and transformed into whatever one wished in order to provide for the desire of the individual eater.
22: But snow and ice endured fire and did not melt so that Israel might know that fire burning in the hail and flashing in the rain destroyed the fruits of their enemies;
23: But again this fire forgot its own power, so that the righteous might be fed.
24: **For Creation, serving you its maker, stretches out against the unrighteous for punishment, but it rests in order to benefit those trusting in you.**
25: Therefore at that time, changing into all things, Creation, according to the wish of those beseeching you, served your all-nourishing gift,
26: in order that your children, whom you love, Lord, might learn that the production of fruits does not nourish man, but your word maintains those believing in you.
27: For this food which was not destroyed by fire, simply dissolved when warmed by a tiny ray of the sun,
28: so that it may be known that it is necessary

> to arise before the sun to give thanks to you
> and before the dawn to pray to you;
> 29: for the hope of the ungrateful will melt as a
> wintry frost and flow as sewer water.

After discussing the worship of creation and idols, the author returns to the issues of punishment and provision, previously discussed in *Wisdom* 11-12. Oscillating between episodes in the wilderness and in Egypt, the sage uses these stories as case studies to discuss God's purposes for punishment and provision. Here, the sage discusses how God's mighty arm scourged the Egyptians with a strange storm of fire-filled hailstones and relentless rain during the seventh plague, which pursued impious Egypt wherever they fled (v. 16).

Once again, the sage stresses the role of personified Creation as he highlights as most incredible the phenomenon of fire blazing in the midst of balls of ice and sheets of rain, which refused to quench the flame. Presenting the plagues as if they occurred simultaneously, the sage states that Creation tamed the fire in order to spare those creatures sent by God to punish the Egyptians—lest their vengeful work be hindered.

This cooperation of the elements continued: while at the same time that the flame was tamed among the creatures, it blazed hotter than fire in the midst of ice to unleash its destroying power upon the Egyptian crops. Amazingly, however, the fire conveniently forgot its power among the Israelites in order to preserve their food. Creation behaved this way—according to v. 18 and v. 22—so that both the Egyptians and the Israelites would have no doubt that this was the judgment of God upon his enemies and the provision of God for the elect.[42]

Creation had more lessons for Israel. In contrast to the fruits of Egypt, which were destroyed by hail falling from the sky, bread rained down from heaven upon Israel, which even transformed itself into whatever taste the individual Hebrew so desired in order to teach Israel from where their provision comes—the word (ῥῆμα) of the Lord. Against the evidence of the Pentateuch where the people complained at the monotonous dish, the sage retells the miracle of manna, who like Creation, ministers to Israel (v. 21).

Moreover, the sage presents the manna as occurring at the same time as the plague of hail and fire.[43] The fire forgot its native power so that the manna

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42 Cf. Wis. 11.13

43 Goodrick calls this the "wildest exaggeration of all" because the author presents the plagues as happening simultaneously [Goodrick, *Wisdom*, 330]. For a discussion of the sage's tendency to combine materials and ignore chronology, see Cheon, *Exodus*, 112.

would not melt (v. 23, cf. 19.21). However, when it was time for the manna to dissolve, with but a mere ray of the sun, it melted away in order to teach Israel to seek God before the dawn. So important is the idea of Creation as servant and champion of Israel that the sage concludes his book with this theme.

3. Creation as Protector of the Pious (Wis. 19.6-10, 18-22)

[6] ὅλη γὰρ ἡ κτίσις ἐν ἰδίῳ γένει πάλιν ἄνωθεν
διετυποῦτο ὑπηρετοῦσα ταῖς σαῖς ἐπιταγαῖς,
ἵνα οἱ σοὶ παῖδες φυλαχθῶσιν ἀβλαβεῖς.
[7] ἡ τὴν παρεμβολὴν σκιάζουσα νεφέλη,
ἐκ δὲ προϋφεστῶτος ὕδατος ξηρᾶς ἀνάδυσις γῆς
ἐθεωρήθη, ἐξ ἐρυθρᾶς θαλάσσης ὁδὸς
ἀνεμπόδιστος
καὶ χλοηφόρον πεδίον ἐκ κλύδωνος βιαίου·
[8] δι' οὗ πανεθνεὶ Διῆλθον οἱ τῇ σῇ
σκεπαζόμενοι χειρὶ θεωρήσαντες θαυμαστὰ
τέρατα.
[9] ὡς γὰρ ἵπποι ἐνεμήθησαν
καὶ ὡς ἀμνοὶ διεσκίρτησαν
αἰνοῦντές σε κύριε τὸν ῥυσάμενον αὐτούς.
[10] ἐμέμνητο γὰρ ἔτι τῶν ἐν τῇ παροικίᾳ
αὐτῶν, πῶς ἀντὶ μὲν γενέσεως ζῴων ἐξήγαγεν
ἡ γῆ σκνῖπα,
ἀντὶ δὲ Ἐνύδρων ἐξηρεύξατο ὁ ποταμὸς πλῆθος
βατράχων.

6: For the whole of Creation served your commands and was perfectly formed again in its own kind from above, so that your children would be protected from harm.
7: The cloud was seen overshadowing the camp, and dry land was seen appearing from where water had previously been, providing an unhindered road rather than the Red Sea and a grassy plain rather than violent waves,
8: through which they passed as one nation covered by your hand and beholding marvellous wonders.
9: For as horses, they were driven out to pasture and as lambs they leaped praising you, Lord, their deliverer.
10: For they still remembered the things during their sojourn—how instead of the birth of animals, the earth led out flies and instead of fish, the river poured out a multitude of frogs.

[18] δι' ἑαυτῶν γὰρ τὰ στοιχεῖα μεθαρμοζόμενα…
[19] χερσαῖα γὰρ εἰς ἔνυδρα μετεβάλλετο,
καὶ νηκτὰ μετέβαινεν ἐπὶ γῆς·
[20] πῦρ ἴσχυεν ἐν ὕδατι τῆς ἰδίας δυνάμεως,
καὶ ὕδωρ τῆς σβεστικῆς φύσεως ἐπελανθάνετο·
[21] φλόγες ἀνάπαλιν εὐφθάρτων ζῴων
οὐκ ἐμάραναν σάρκας ἐμπεριπατούντων,
οὐδὲ τηκτὸν κρυσταλλοειδὲς εὔτηκτον γένος
ἀμβροσίας τροφῆς.
[22] κατὰ πάντα γάρ κύριε ἐμεγάλυνας τὸν λαόν
σου καὶ ἐδόξασας
καὶ οὐχ ὑπερεῖδες ἐν παντὶ καιρῷ καὶ τόπῳ
παριστάμενος.

18: The elements were changing places with one another…
19: For land creatures were changed into water creatures and swimming creatures crossed over onto the land;
20: fire was able to maintain its power in the midst of water, while water forgot its fire-quenching nature;
21: on the other side, flames did not burn away the flesh of perishable creatures walking among the tongues of fire, neither did the soluble, icy sort of divine food melt.
22: For with reference to all things, Lord, you magnify and glorify your people,
and you did not disregard them; rather you stand by them at all times and in every place.

Whereas in the former discussions, the sage personified Creation to contrast the fate of the wicked with the reward of the godly, or to compare the punishment of Egypt with the provision of Israel, here, it is personified mostly to demonstrate its benefit to Israel. In 19.1-5, the sage discusses why the

Egyptians changed their minds and decided to destroy Israel on the banks of the Red Sea. It is because God knew the Egyptians would change their minds, for they were compelled to a fate worthy of their crime. This occurred so that the strange punishment of the wicked would be complete and so that Israel could be saved through an incredible journey. How Creation provides this fantastic experience dominates the rest of the chapter.

The sage discusses Creation's benefit to Israel in their crossing the Red Sea in Exodus 14 when the cloud overshadowed the camp and the waters dried up; however, the sage omits the role of the angel in the original narrative and exaggerates the role of Creation instead. This follows Pierre Beauchamp's conclusion that the sage's depiction of the Red Sea event alludes to Genesis 1—darkness was over the deep (19.7), dry land appeared (19.7b), followed by plants and creatures (19.9-11).[44]

However, rather than just being the work of God, Creation works with God. While Philo claims God can change the elements whenever he desires in order to destroy the wicked,[45] here the sage talks about the elements (τὰ στοιχεῖα) of creation changing to benefit the righteous. Here, Creation itself moves from order to chaos as it unravels in the face of God's enemies,[46] but it complies with God's command so that it is refashioned from chaos to order for the benefit of the pious.[47] For the sage, the aid of Creation is clearly seen at the Red Sea where elements exchanged places so that even land animals became sea creatures while the creatures of the sea walked on dry land.

Once again, the sage illustrates Creation's help by referring to the seventh plague where the fire burned in water because the water forgot its power to quench. The author also draws from other plagues: the earth gave birth to flies instead of animals, and the river spewed forth frogs instead of fish. The work of Creation proves the sage's final proclamation, God never abandons his people in persecution but, as seen in his Creation, glorifies them in the midst of it.

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44 Beauchamp, "Sagesse," 491-526.

45 Philo, *Mos*. 1.96 [cf. Engel, *Weisheit*, 297].

46 McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 213.

47 Commentators explain these verses by citing the Greek philosophical principle of mutually interchangeable elements. See Gregg, *Wisdom*, 182; Goodrick, *Wisdom*, 367; Reider, *Wisdom*, 217; Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 197; almost all of the commentaries cite Epictetus 3.24 for support. Commentators also see the sage, in the manner of the Stoics, using this principle to explain away miracles. See Schmitt, *Weisheit*, 80; Cheon, *Exodus*, 98; Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 324-325. McGlynn sees this passage as an attempt to reveal a moral law at the heart of Creation and to reconcile the biblical doctrine of Creation with Greek philosophy (McGlynn, *Divine Judgment*, 213-214).

4. The Purposes for the Personification of Creation

The personification of the World as a warrior who destroys the wicked and as a champion who protects the godly serves one of two primary purposes, depending on the individual. For the ungodly, the personification serves as a warning that they are surrounded by a mighty warrior whose clutches they will not be able to escape. For the godly, personified Creation serves to encourage them: they have not been forsaken in afflictions behind enemy lines.

To warn the wicked

First, such a vivid depiction of a World warrior would affect the emotions of a person living an evil life with words that are "simply more terrifying."[48] For these individuals, the personification of Creation at the visitation would serve as a scare tactic, perhaps causing them to reconsider their life in light of the future.

This conclusion is consistent with Philo's discussion of why Moses speaks of God as clothing himself in armour, as wielding a sword, casting arrows, and using wind, fire, and lightning for his weapons to repel his enemies.[49] As we saw above, according to Philo, by presenting Yahweh as an angry God who uses Creation to chastise fools, Moses hoped "to eradicate passions and diseases of the soul," as such a manipulative tactic is "the only way a fool can receive correction."[50] For the wicked, then, the personification would serve as a warning by demonstrating how bad it was in the past and how terrible it will be in the future for those who go against the God and people of Israel.

To encourage the godly

The purpose of the personification of Creation is not reserved for the wicked alone. As we mentioned above, most scholars believe the sage writes to an audience suffering for its faith. Such experiences naturally cause one to ask: "Why does God allow the righteous to suffer?" Or, in the apt words of Gideon, "If the Lord is indeed with us, then why have these evils found us?"[51] One way

48 Demetrius, *On Style* II.100

49 Philo, *Quod Deus* 60. The contexts are different, however. Here, Philo seeks to explain that despite anthropomorphisms, God is not like a person.

50 *Quod Deus* 67-69. In § 66, Philo likens Moses to a surgeon who deceives his patient so that the patient will accept treatment.

51 Jdg. 6.13 LXX.

the sage answers this question is with the personification of Creation as the champion of righteous Israel and punisher of wicked Egypt. [52]

Therefore, the support of Creation as evidenced from the past and promised in the future would have chiefly served as a source of encouragement to those who are suffering. Despite the current power of the wicked, God's Creation is on their side and will ultimately destroy these fools just as their Champion did to their evil Egyptian persecutors. In the face of affliction, the godly can expect relief, reward and retribution. In this sense, then, the personification becomes a way of deflecting attention away from the current problem of suffering to the work of Creation in the future.[53]

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have seen that the sage's personification of Creation goes beyond the other personifications scholars tend to associate it with; rather than as a mere weapon or soldier of God, Creation is exalted as the champion and provider of Israel. The focus upon Creation's deliverance of the righteous would warn the wicked and remind the righteous that, in the past, Creation protected the people of God from persecution. In other words, God's work at the Exodus serves as a precursor for his work at the *eschaton*.

Such a precedent gives hope in the presence of current persecution. They are not alone in their suffering; God is with them through Creation and will glorify them through these afflictions.[54] Therefore, in the face of injustice, the sage personifies Creation to defend God's justice: God will destroy the wicked in the future; he has not forsaken the elect but provided for them—and all of this through personified Creation.

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52 Such a claim would have castigated the Egyptian religion, which worshiped parts of nature as gods. So also, such depiction of their history would have fostered ethnic and religious pride as it sought to convey to the Jews that their race as well as their religion is superior to their Greek and Egyptian neighbours.

53 Therefore, "while the present experience of righteousness gives hope of final vindication…the hope of final vindication confirms and even makes possible the present experience of righteousness," [J.J. Collins, "Apocalyptic Eschatology as the Transcendence of Death," *CBQ* 36 (1974), 41].

54 Such a purpose is in line with Crenshaw's outline of the distinctive features of the creation theology of the time: "(1) The threat of chaos in the cosmic, political, social realms evokes a response in terms of creation theology; (2) in wisdom thought, creation functions primarily as a defence of divine justice; and (3) the centrality of the question of God's integrity in Israelite literature places creation theology at the center of the theological enterprise," [James L. Crenshaw, *Prolegomenon*, Studies in Ancient Israelite Wisdom (New York: Ktav, 1976), 27].

Now that we have discussed the personifications of Death who partners with the ungodly and Creation who partners with the righteous and fights against the ungodly, we shall now turn to Logos who, like Creation, brings death to the wicked and fights for the righteous.

Chapter 5

The Personification of Logos

Introduction

Thus far, we have seen the personification of Death enter into the world despite God's plan for creation. As an answer to this problem, the sage refers to the personification of Creation to promise retribution for these fools who also persecute the godly. Within *Wisdom*, there is a relationship between Logos and Creation as well as with Death. By Logos, God made the Cosmos (9.1); and through the word,[1] he kept the godly from death by healing the Israelites from the plague of serpents (16.12). With the Logos in his hand and Creation on his clothes, Aaron overcame Death and Wrath, and thereby, rescued Israel from the wilderness plague (18.20-25). In *Wisdom,* Logos is not just an instrument of creation, a remedy for death or a weapon against it, but also a divine tool of destruction, which fills all of Egypt with death.[2]

The sage has a way of describing the destruction of the wicked like no other. Besides the terrible wrath of Creation discussed in the last chapter, the sage claims that God's almighty hand is powerful enough to have sent wild animals upon his enemies or even to have created a new and exotic fire-breathing monster, which shoots lightning from its eyes, and terrible enough to kill a person with but a glance.[3] Along with the future judgment by Creation and the hypothetical punishments by beasts and dragons, almighty Logos appears as a divine tool of justice as it wipes out the first born of Egypt during the Passover.

It is this last event which we shall discuss in this chapter, beginning with the context (1), and then moving to the background (2), to the relationship of Logos with Sophia (3), and finally to the purposes for the personification (4). While most scholars are content to show the similarities of Logos with other personifications of the Word and other parallels, we will underline the

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1 There he uses the word ῥῆμα.

2 See Michelangelo Priotto, *La Prima Pasqua in Sap 18,5-25* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane Bologna, 1987), 135, who argues that death should not be seen as only mortality of the first-born Egyptians, but eschatological death, parallel to Death and Destruction in 1.12 and 18.15.

3 *Wisdom* 11. Cf. Test. Abr. 17.12-19, where Death exposes his appearance (the head of dragons, the face of a lion, et. al) and as a result, seven thousand servants died in fear.

peculiarities of the sage's personification. It will be argued that the sage employs this personification to distance a holy God from direct acts of destruction as well as to encourage the saints in the midst of suffering by promising a day of complete retribution.

1. Logos and the Passover (Wis. 18.14-16)

[14] ἡσύχου γὰρ σιγῆς περιεχούσης τὰ πάντα καὶ νυκτὸς ἐν ἰδίῳ τάχει μεσαζούσης
[15] ὁ παντοδύναμός σου Λόγος ἀπ' οὐρανῶν ἐκ θρόνων βασιλείων
ἀπότομος πολεμιστὴς εἰς μέσον τῆς ὀλεθρίας ἥλατο γῆς
ξίφος ὀξὺ τὴν ἀνυπόκριτον ἐπιταγήν σου φέρων
[16] καὶ στὰς ἐπλήρωσεν τὰ πάντα θανάτου καὶ οὐρανοῦ μὲν ἥπτετο βεβήκει δ' ἐπὶ γῆς.

14: When eerie[4] Silence had overcome all things and Night was half-way through her swift course,
15: your all-powerful Word, a relentless warrior, leapt from heaven from the royal throne into the midst of a land of destruction bearing your sincere command as his sword;
16: standing up, he filled all things with death, touching heaven as he stood on the earth.

The sage contrasts the destruction of Egypt with the deliverance of Israel, and to illustrate the former, the sage says Logos jumps out of heaven from the throne of God[5] as an omnipotent servant who deals out death upon Egypt during the tenth plague. Being so large, the warrior touches heaven while standing on the earth.[6] From here, the sage goes on to discuss the haunting dreams which accompany Logos and prevent the impious from dying in ignorance. These apparitions appear to the ungodly while they are in the throes of death in order to reveal the cause of their destruction.

The judgment by Logos has numerous parallels with the personification of Creation in 5.17-23. Ponizy discusses these parallels in detail.[7] For example, the only other occurrence of ἄλλομαι in *Wisdom* is of the lightning leaping against the ungodly. Moreover, just as Logos wields God's command as a sharp sword, so also in 5.20, God sharpens wrath for his sword. The only other occurrence of sincere (ἀνυπόκριτος) is also in 5.18, where it describes God's

4 According to Ponizy, in this context ἡσύχος refers to the silence which precedes an attack (cf. Ps 76.9-10), [Bogdan Ponizy, "Logos in the Book of Wisdom 18:14-16," in "*Dort ziehen Schiffe dahin. . .*" ed. Matthias Augustin and Klaus-Dietrich Schunck (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996), 170].

5 Larcher infers that the reference to Logos as coming from the throne of God implies that it is superior to the angels who merely surround God's throne [Chrysostome Larcher, *Le Livre de La Sagesse*, 3 vols., vol. 3 (Paris: Gabalda, 1985), 1015].

6 See Priotto who discusses "almighty" and "royal throne" as words usually attributed to God [Priotto, *Pasqua*, 129-130].

7 Ponizy, "Logos," 172-173. See also Carl Ludwig Wilibald Grimm, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1860), 286-287.

helmet of justice. Furthermore, there is a word play with ἀπότομος/ἀποτόμως in 5.20, 22 and 18.15.[8]

These parallels lead scholars to conclude that the Exodus plague becomes a "sign and anticipation of the Last Judgment."[9] While this is most likely the case, there are significant differences. For example, whereas Creation will execute justice, Logos already has. Moreover, whereas Creation attacks fools in general, Logos wars against Egypt in particular.

2. The Background for the Passage

Although the personification of Logos was common,[10] there is only one other place (to our knowledge) that Logos is presented as an agent of God's wrath. In LXX Hab. 3.5, in the place of the MT's דֶּבֶר (pestilence), the translator writes that Logos went out from the face of the Lord. In contrast, rather than an agent of wrath, Philo presents the Logos as an agent who puts an end to the wrath which came upon Israel in the wilderness:

> I also marvel at the sacred Logos intensely running with eagerness but without breath "in order to stand between the dead and the living"; for "immediately" Moses said, "The plague stopped."[11]

This personification is striking since *Wisdom* 18 transitions from the work of Logos at the Passover to this experience of Wrath in the wilderness, where Aaron confronts Death with the Logos.

The substitution of Logos as the death angel of the tenth plague is peculiar as well. Schmitt argues that the sage combines Exod. 12.12 with 12.23 and inserts Logos for the destroyer.[12] Whereas Exodus 12 presents God himself as the slayer of the first-born, the sage "personifies Logos and allegorizes the

8 Ponizy, "Logos," 172-173.

9 Ibid., 173. See also James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and Its Consequences* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 137-138.

10 For discussions on the uses of Logos, see Giuseppe Scarpat, *Libro della Sapienza*, 3 vols., vol. 3 (Brescia: Paideia, 1999), 264-272 and H. Kleinknecht, "ΛΕΓΩ," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 77-91.

11 Philo, *Quis Her.* 201: θαυμάζω καὶ τὸν μετὰ σπουδῆς ἀπνευστὶ δραμόντα συντόνως ἱερὸν λόγον, "ἵνα στῇ μέσος τῶν τεθνηκότων καὶ τῶν ζώντων· εὐθυς" γάρ φησι Μωυσῆς "ἐκόπασεν ἡ θραῦσις."

12 Cf. Armin Schmitt, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Würzburg: Verlag, 1989), 78.

sword as God's command."[13] Scholars often point to the role of the *Memra* in Targums such as Neofiti 1 on Exodus 12, where the *Memra* of the Lord slays the first-born. [14] What scholars do not tend to mention is that in these accounts even though the *Memra* is the one who slaughters the first-born, the *Memra* is also the one who refuses to give the Destroyer permission to enter into the houses of Israel.[15] (We shall discuss this further in the next chapter.)

Moreover, there is debate as to whether the background comes from Greek or Hebrew thought. Wis. 18.14-16 contains many elements from the Hebrew bible.[16] For example, Logos is personified in Ps. 147.15, 18, as it runs swiftly from the mouth of the Lord to prohibit the seasons from battle.[17] Moreover, Engel brings out the similarities between this passage and Heb. 4.12, which he believes point to a similar tradition or even a dependency of Hebrews on *Wisdom.*[18] Gregg insists that the sage's personification of Logos is "Hebraic in thought, not Greek," and points to 1 Chron. 21.15-17 as his evidence.[19]

Most scholars admit that there is an analogy between this personification and the angel in 1 Chron. 21.15-17,[20] where God sends his agent to Jerusalem; there, it is the angel of the Lord, who "ἑστῶτα ἀνὰ μέσον τῆς γῆς καὶ ἀνὰ μέσον τοῦ οὐρανοῦ καὶ ἡ ῥομφαία αὐτοῦ ἐσπασμένη ἐν τῇ χειρὶ αὐτοῦ ἐκτεταμένη ἐπὶ Ιερουσαλημ." Despite the similarities, the parallel is not exact, since the sage does not call Logos an angel and the Logos destroys Egypt without reprieve rather than attacks Jerusalem only for a time.

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13 S. Cheon, *The Exodus Story in the Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 86. There were other authors who argued for intermediary agent in the plague, such as Jubilees 49.2-6 and Ezekiel the Tragedian. Targum Pseudo-Jonathan claims that God was assisted not by one angel but by 90,000 myriads of destroying angels [see Joseph Reider, *The Book of Wisdom* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), 210]. According to Winston, the sage's view lies "somewhere between the view of the author of Jubilees who assigns this plague to Mastema and that of the rabbis who emphatically deny that God employed any intermediary whatever [David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979), 319].

14 Cf. Targ. Ps-Jonathan on Exod. 12.29.

15 A similar paradox is found in the Exodus account as well—whereas the Lord smites the Egyptians, he prevents the destroyer from touching the Israelites (Exod. 12.23).

16 E.g. Job 4.12-15 and Hos. 6.5, [Ernest G. Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 120-121]. Many commentators also refer to Isa. 55.10-11, e.g. Lorenz Dürr, *Die Wertung des göttlichen Wortes im Alten Testament und im Antiken Orient* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs, 1938), 126 and Larcher, *Sagesse*, 1021.

17 Cf. Isa. 55.11.

18 Helmut Engel, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk GmbH, 1998), 284.

19 J.A.F. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), xxxvii-xxxviii.

20 Some scholars also see a parallel to Jacob's ladder [e.g. James M. Reese, *The Book of Wisdom, Song of Songs* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983), 191 and Ponizy, "Logos," 174].

Furthermore, such a description as is found in 1 Chronicles is not unique to the Hebrew bible; this can be seen with Homer's Eris, Virgil's Rumour, and Philo's Pillar.[21] Thus, the sage also probably draws from "the Hellenistic commonplace of gigantic figures in divine epiphanies."[22] Besides the common mention of gigantic figures, other elements demonstrate further Hellenistic influences upon this passage as well. For example, Ponizy notes that the philosophical adjectives παντοδύναμός, ἀπότομος, and ἀνυπόκριτος, of which he infers argue for an image derived from other Hellenistic influences rather than from a "biblical heritage" alone.[23] Similarly, Winston brings out the parallels between the personification of Logos here and that of Phronesis in the Hymn to Athena:

> From his awful head wise Zeus himself bare her arrayed in warlike arms of flashing gold…But Athena sprang quickly from the immortal head and stood before Zeus…shaking a sharp spear.[24]

Due to so many common elements it is difficult to discern one certain background.[25] What is more significant is how the sage adapts these elements and applies them to the personified Logos.

3. Logos and Lady Wisdom

Another issue of debate is: Does the sage identify Logos with Sophia?[26] Here, Gregg concludes:

> The Logos is not conceived of in this book as a personal intermediary in the same rank with Wisdom and either coequal or identical with her, but as merely a rhetorical personification. The writer would not identify a substance with a shadow.[27]

McGlynn offers two reasons why one might reject the idea that Logos and Sophia are synonymous. First, the sage would not identify the two because

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21 Homer, *Iliad,* 4.443; Virgil, *Aeneid,* 4.177; Philo, *Decal.* 44. Cf. also Rev. 10.5 and *Testament of Orpheus,* 33-34. Mack finds parallels from Egyptian sources as well [Burton L. Mack, *Logos und Sophia* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 102-106].

22 Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 191.

23 Ponizy, "Logos," 173.

24 As quoted by Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 317.

25 This is especially the case since the distinction between Hebrew and Hellenistic thought can create a false dichotomy.

26 It is striking that in Egyptian religion, two of the most important "hypostasized divine qualities" are Hu and Sia, Word and Wisdom respectively [Helmer Ringgren, *Word and Wisdom* (Lund: Hakan Ohlssons Boktryckeri, 1947), 9].

27 Gregg, *Wisdom*, xxxix. So also, Larcher notes that although Sophia is represented in similar terms, the uniqueness of her relationship with God is stressed by terms of intimacy and by the attribution of personal traits [Larcher, *Sagesse*, 1016].

they are of different genders.[28] However, what scholars have not mentioned is that unlike Philo who due to his misogyny was concerned with gender (although he still equated Logos and Lady Wisdom),[29] the sage is not as concerned with gender and uses personifications of different genders synonymously—e.g. ἡ κτίσις and ὁ κόσμος, ἡ ὀργή and ὁ ὀλεθρος, τό πνεῦμα and ἡ σοφία. Second, one might argue that rather than with Wisdom, Logos should be identified with Wrath since, according to McGlynn, the sage personifies Wrath as king in 11.10. The sage, however, does not personify Wrath as a king in 11.10 and, as we shall argue below, Logos should not be identified with Wrath in the following passage since Aaron overcomes wrath by the Logos.

Furthermore, there is reason to believe that the sage does identify Logos and Sophia. Engel demonstrates that Logos and Sophia are both instruments of creation in 9.1-4, 10 and 7.21; and consequently, he concludes they are synonymous.[30] Scarpat, Dürr, and Winston come to the same conclusion based on the fact that both personifications proceed from God's throne.[31] In light of these statements, the sage's pattern to use different names to refer to the same personification, and Philo's equation of the two,[32] we also conclude that Logos and Sophia are synonymous in *Wisdom*.

4. The Purposes for the Personification of Logos

To distance God from punishment

According to Priotto, one reason the sage personifies Logos is to describe divine action without diminishing divine transcendence.[33] Cheon comes to a similar conclusion; the sage personifies Logos to "portray God's powerful punishment as vividly and fearfully as possible, because it is not possible to

28 Monya McGlynn, *Divine Judgment and Divine Benevolence in the Book of Wisdom* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 209. She actually goes on to conclude that Logos and Wisdom are identical and that they should be identified with Wrath as well. Although we will agree with her former inference, we shall argue against the latter below. Cf. Charles Everett Hesselgrave, "The Hebrew Personification of Wisdom" (New York University, 1909), 24.

29 See *Fug.* 51, where Philo redefines Wisdom as masculine despite her name. Nevertheless, Philo identifies Logos and Wisdom together; e.g. *Leg. All.* 1.65.

30 Engel, *Weisheit*, 283. See also Scarpat, *Sapienza*, 267.

31 Scarpat, *Sapienza*, 267; Dürr, *Wertung*, 127-128; Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 38. See also Ponizy, "Logos," 172; Schmitt, *Weisheit*, 78 and Johannes Fichtner, *Weisheit Salomos* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1938), 65.

32 For more on the similarities between Logos in Wisdom and in Philo, see Scarpat, *Sapienza*, 267-272.

33 Priotto, *Pasqua*, 131. So also Engel, *Weisheit*, 283; Gregg, *Wisdom*, xxxix; and Clarke, *Wisdom*, 121]. Cf. Hesselgrave, "Hebrew Personification", 21-22.

describe God himself."[34] As we have seen so far in our investigation when it comes to the actual act of punishment, the sage stresses the role of personifications instead of the direct involvement of God. It is possible then that there is more to the personifications than what these scholars propose. Since (as we have seen) the sage uses the personification of Death to distance a good God from the origin of evil, perhaps he uses the personifications of Creation and Logos to distance a God who does not delight in destruction from the direct execution of it.

Such an interpretation would be consistent with what one sees in Philo, who holds that since God is righteous, nothing destructive can come directly from him; therefore, God is surrounded by powers that perform questionable acts for him.[35] For Philo, this is why there were three visitors who appeared before Abraham: one was "the truly Existent," there to give only good things by his immediate agency while the other two act as agents to exert immediate destruction so that the Lord may be considered the author of good alone and not the primary cause of any evil.[36] In short, so that God may remain above reproach, his subordinates carry out his judgment.[37] Perhaps here, rather than angels, Creation and Logos are the subordinates who carry out God's bidding for destruction.

To encourage the persecuted

Also, as mentioned above, due to its parallel with Creation in *Wisdom* 5[38] and its eschatological terms, commentators tend to conclude that the sage uses this passage as a foreshadow of the future end-time judgment.[39] Reese refers to the passage as a flashback describing God's final judgment, which "pounces down with relentless anger to bring about an 'irrefutable' punishment upon those who oppose his people."[40] As with the personification of Creation, such language is "simply more terrifying"[41] and would serve, on the one hand, as a warning to the wicked and on the other as a promise of retribution for the

34 Cheon, *Exodus*, 86.

35 Philo, *Conf.* 171.

36 Philo, *Conf.* 143.

37 Perhaps the sage is not as strong in this conviction as Philo since he does describe God in military array; he does not, however, ever actually describe God as fighting. The closest he comes is in 16.16.

38 Ponizy, "Logos," 169-177.

39 Priotto, *Pasqua*, 134-135.

40 Reese, *Hellenistic Influence*, 138.

41 See the purpose of metaphor according to Demetrius, *On Style* II.100 and Philo, *Quod Deus* 60.

godly. Such an anticipation of future judgment would serve as consolation to the persecuted and an incentive to the faithful.[42]

Conclusion

Logos occurs as one of many divine tools of judgment in *Wisdom*. Although Logos was frequently personified in Greco-Roman literature, its role as an agent of divine wrath at the Passover is peculiar to *Wisdom*. Instead of Yahweh or the angel of Death given in the original narratives, the sage draws more from "gigantic figures in divine epiphanies"[43] and has Logos execute the tenth plague upon Egypt. While scholars have mentioned the parallel of the *Memra* substituted for the Passover angel in the Targums, they have not discussed the parallel of the *Memra* as the protector of Israel against the Destroyer with Aaron's use of the Logos to protect Israel from the Destroyer. (The full significance of this will be seen in the next chapter.)

According to scholars, the sage personifies Logos to explain the immanence of a transcendent God as well as to encourage those who are currently suffering persecution by promising a future retribution reminiscent of the judgment of Logos. We propose that with Logos he also seeks to distance God from the direct act of destruction. Moreover, the personification serves to set up a contrast between the irrevocable sentence upon the ungodly with the personification of Wrath, who is turned away by the godly. It is to this latter personification that we now turn.

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42 Priotto, *Pasqua*, 169. Similarly, James Crenshaw demonstrates that the sage references great anxiety and guilt in dreams as a strategy to answer the problem of evil. He concludes that the sage picks up and develops the two-fold solution to the problem of evil given by Sirach: "the world is wondrously made so as to encourage virtue and punish wickedness." Therefore, "the wicked are victims of great *Angst*, of nightmares, and of conscious worry and grief," [James L. Crenshaw, "The problem of Theodicy in Sirach: On Human Bondage," *JBL* (1975), 59, 61].

43 Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 191.

Chapter 6

The Personification of Wrath

Introduction

Thus far, we have seen that the sage uses the personification of Death to distance God from the origin of evil, and the personification of Creation and Logos to promise retribution for evil. As we saw in the last chapter, the sage discusses the narrative of Exodus 11-12 and casts Logos as the enemy of Egypt. However, in the following verses where he discusses the narrative of Num. 16.41-50,[1] he presents Wrath (Ὀργή) with its synonyms [Destruction (Θραῦσις), Rage (Θυμός), Anger (Χόλος), the Punisher (τόν Κολάζοντα), the Destroyer (ὁ Ὀλεθρεύων), and Death (Θανάτος), as Israel's foe. In the former, there is little doubt that Logos is divinely ordained to execute a righteous judgment against the Egyptians. Things become muddled, however, when the experience of Death and Wrath comes upon 'righteous' Israel in the wilderness.

There is debate as to whether or not Wrath should be associated with Logos as another agent of divine punishment. To do so places Wrath, like Logos, as a representative of God.[2] Such a conclusion leads Gregg to say: Aaron withstood God with "God's Creation, God's chosen, and God Himself (in symbol)."[3] Similarly, Samuel Cheon reasons that rather than a personification of the plague, the figure is an angel who works for God.[4]

The strongest arguments for seeing Wrath as either the personification of a divine attribute or an angelic agent sent from God is wrath's identification with God in the parallel passage of *Wisdom* 16 and its association with the Lord in the original narrative. First, Wrath occurs with a genitive of possession (ἡ

1 LXX: 17.7-13.

2 In support of this, see Monya McGlynn, *Divine Judgment and Divine Benevolence in the Book of Wisdom* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 209.

3 J.A.F. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), 177, 180.

4 S. Cheon, *The Exodus Story in the Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 89. Cf. 4 Macc. 7.11.

ὀργή σου) in the parallel passage, Wis. 16.5.[5] Secondly, in the original context it is the wrath of God which Aaron appeases through propitiation.[6]

Despite these arguments, some scholars still argue against associating Wrath with Logos as an agent of divine punishment. For example, Scarpat infers that the sage places this personification in contrast to the Logos.[7] So also, according to Larcher, these terms do not refer to God but to a being which Aaron reduces to powerlessness and fright in a scene with resembles "l'exorcisme d'une puissance maléfique."[8] Similarly, Watson argues that the sage inserts the angel of death from the Passover narrative (Ex. 12.23), which sharply differentiates the figure from the wrath of the Lord in the Numbers account.[9]

Although we will avoid the issue of whether the figure is a rhetorical device or an angel,[10] in this chapter we shall also argue that the personification of Wrath should be seen as distinct from Logos and as an enemy of Holy Israel rather than as a punisher of her sins. In addition to the arguments of other scholars, we shall demonstrate how our investigations of the personifications of Death, Creation and the Logos support the view that the sage uses this personification to distance God from the event.

Before we do this, however, we should first consider Wis. 18.20-25 as a whole and discuss its modification of the original narrative (1). Thereafter, we shall compare this passage to its parallel passage in 16.1-12 in order to see the similarities as well as the differences in the sage's two treatments of the experiences of death and wrath in the history of Israel (2). Once this is done, we will be in a better position to argue that Wrath should *not* be identified with Logos in the previous passage (3). Then we will look at a textual variant which tries to make sense of the personification in v. 25 (4). Finally, we shall propose two purposes for the personification: that like the personification of Death in 1.16 and 2.24, the personification here serves to distance God from the event

5 One manuscript (S†) also renders 18.20: ὀργή σου.

6 Although propitiation (ἐξιλασμόν) is mentioned in 18.21, it was not unusual for writers to employ the term ἱλασμός and its cognates in reference to turning away of demons as well as gods [see Friedrich Büchsel, "ΙΛΑΣΜΟΣ," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 310-11].

7 Giuseppe Scarpat, *Libro della Sapienza*, 3 vols., vol. 3 (Brescia: Paideia, 1999), 296.

8 Chrysostome Larcher, *Le Livre de La Sagesse*, 3 vols., vol. 3 (Paris: Gabalda, 1985), 1033. See also F.W. Farrar: "It is clear that he is meant to be an *evil* angel, or he would not have *feared* the holy garments," [F.W. Farrar, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (London: John Murray, 1888), 530]. Italics the author's.

9 Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark 2004), 403.

10 Such a discussion would come back to the nature of the personification, which is beyond the scope of this work. We are inclined to agree with Scarpat who concludes that it is not safe to say whether the sage understands the personification as an angel as in 4 Macc. 7.11 or as a personification in general [Scarpat, *Sapienza*, 296].

and that as a foil to the personification of Logos, the sage uses it to foster ethnic pride (5).

1. Israel's Experience of Death and Wrath (Wis. 18.20-25)

[20] ἥψατο δὲ καὶ δικαίων πεῖρα Θανάτου, καὶ Θραῦσις ἐν ἐρήμῳ ἐγένετο πλήθους. ἀλλ' οὐκ ἐπὶ πολὺ ἔμεινεν ἡ Ὀργή· [21] σπεύσας γὰρ ἀνὴρ ἄμεμπτος προεμάχησεν τὸ τῆς ἰδίας λειτουργίας ὅπλον προσευχὴν καὶ θυμιάματος ἐξιλασμὸν κομίσας· ἀντέστη τῷ Θυμῷ καὶ πέρας ἐπέθηκε τῇ συμφορᾷ δεικνὺς ὅτι σός ἐστιν θεράπων· [22] ἐνίκησεν δὲ τὸν Χόλον οὐκ ἰσχύι τοῦ σώματος, οὐχ ὅπλων ἐνεργείᾳ, ἀλλὰ λόγῳ τὸν Κολάζοντα ὑπέταξεν ὅρκους πατέρων καὶ διαθήκας ὑπομνήσας. [23] σωρηδὸν γὰρ ἤδη πεπτωκότων ἐπ' ἀλλήλων νεκρῶν μεταξὺ στὰς ἀνέκοψε τὴν Ὀργὴν καὶ διέσχισεν τὴν πρὸς τοὺς ζῶντας ὁδόν. [24] ἐπὶ γὰρ ποδήρους ἐνδύματος ἦν ὅλος ὁ κόσμος, καὶ πατέρων δόξαι ἐπὶ τετραστίχου λίθων γλυφῆς, καὶ μεγαλωσύνη σου ἐπὶ διαδήματος κεφαλῆς αὐτοῦ. [25] τούτοις εἶξεν ὁ Ὀλεθρεύων ταῦτα δὲ ἐφοβήθη· ἦν γὰρ μόνη ἡ πεῖρα τῆς ὀργῆς ἱκανή.

But the experience of Death also touched the righteous, and Destruction came upon the multitude in the wilderness. But Wrath did not remain for long;
for quickly the blameless man, bringing prayer and the incense of propitiation, fought with the weapon of his own worship; he opposed Wrath and put an end to the unfortunate event, for he demonstrated that he is your servant;
and he conquered Wrath not with strength of body, not with power of weapons, but with the Logos he subdued the Punisher recalling the oaths of the fathers and the covenants.
For when the dead had already fallen upon one another in heaps he stood between Israel and Wrath, and he drove Wrath back as he cut off the path to the living.
For the entire world was on his long robe, and the glory of the fathers were carved on the four rows of stones, and your majesty was on the diadem of his head.
To these things the Destroyer yielded, and he was afraid of these; for the test of Wrath alone was being sufficient.

The sage brackets his discussion of the wilderness plague of Numbers 16 (17) with the phrases "experience of Death" (πεῖρα θανάτου) and "test of Wrath" (πεῖρα τῆς ὀργῆς). This experience in the original narrative stands in the wake of Korah's rebellion. Not appreciating the way Moses and Aaron had dealt with Korah and his associates, the Israelites commit the same crime by gathering together against God's two servants.

In response to the nation's actions, Moses and Aaron drop everything and rush to the tent of meeting. Their fears become realised as God appears and promises to wipe out Israel. Moses and Aaron do not even dare question God, nor do they try to reason with him. All they can do for the moment is fall on their faces, as Wrath goes out from the face of the Lord and begins to destroy the people (ἐξῆλθεν γὰρ ὀργὴ ἀπὸ προσώπου κυρίου ἤρκται θραύειν τὸν λαόν).[11]

11 Num. 16.5 (17.5).

The narrator stresses the urgency of the matter by depicting Moses and Aaron in a race against time to stay the wrath of God before it is too late. Then, Moses immediately commands Aaron to run and offer propitiation to satisfy God's anger, which had already started to eliminate Israel. Aaron obeys, and as soon as possible, appeases the wrath of God—albeit not before God had slain almost 15,000 Israelites.[12]

Within the Numbers account, the narrator depicts patient Moses and sensible Aaron as heroes who stand between a seemingly impatient, unmerciful God who has lost his temper and between the rebellious nation of Israel who are about to lose their lives as a result. It appears God would have succeeded in this plan had it not been for the quick thinking of Moses and immediate action of Aaron meant to pacify the raging God. Such a bold depiction of God's wrath does not fit well within the sage's framework in which God is all merciful and patient, and Israel righteous.[13] Thus, if in this case God's anger is punishment, then either Israel or God's wrath is unjust. Occasions in Israel's history when they encounter wrath must therefore be explained.[14] We shall now look at how the sage deals with this story as well as the narrative where God sends the plague of serpents upon Israel.

2. The Role of God and Wrath in Wis. 16.1-12 & 18.20-25

In addition to the story of God's wrath upon Israel in Numbers 16 (17), the sage also deals with the plague of the serpents in Numbers 21 (Wis. 16.1-12). In neither account does the sage incriminate Israel. In fact, the sage ignores the parts of the story where Israel complains, since it would call the character of Israel into question. The sage also refuses to admit that God's wrath was unjust.

To get around these two issues, in 16.1-12, *Wisdom* manipulates the original narrative so that no longer do the Israelites die by the bite of serpents in the wilderness (cf. Num. 21.4-9).[15] Moreover, the sage also emphasises the brevity of the situation: οὐ μέχρι τέλους ἔμεινεν ἡ ὀργή σου.[16] Finally, the author stresses the positive results of the event which led the enemies of God

12 Cf. Isa. 37.36; Zech 5.5; 1 Macc. 7.41; and Rev. 14.15, 17; 15.6.

13 The sage never explicitly claims that Israel was guilty of sin in spite of the original narratives from which he draws. Moreover, it is striking that in the sage's history of Israel (*Wisdom* 11-19), he conveniently ignores Exodus 32 and quickly explains that the bronze serpent was not an idol. Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* iii.95-97.

14 The fact that Israel suffered and died does not mean that the author considered them to be the object of God's punishment since in chapters 1-6 the righteous suffer and die without sinning, see Cheon, *Exodus*, 88.

15 See Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 401.

16 Wis. 16.5

to confess that God delivers from all sufferings (v. 8) and the children of God to remember that the word of God heals all wounds (vv. 11-12).

The sage employs similar strategies in 18.20-25. For example, the sage also seeks to make the encounter with Wrath less severe by stressing how quickly it passed; in 16.5 God's wrath did not remain until the end, in 18.20 Wrath did not remain for long (οὐκ ἐπὶ πολὺ ἔμεινεν ἡ ὀργή). Furthermore, the experience of Wrath and Death also had a positive result; whereas the test of serpents served to instruct, the experience of Death alone was serving as a sufficient test (v. 25). Just as in chapter 16 the sage highlights the role of personified Creation and Word of the Lord, in chapter 18 he stresses God's servant, Aaron, who routes the Destroyer with the whole world on his garment and the word in his hand.

Nevertheless, there are significant differences in the two treatments as well. Whereas in 16.1-12, the sage stresses God's divine purpose for the event, in 18.20-25, one is unsure what role God plays in the encounter. Since the author emphasises God's role in 16.1-12, he is compelled to highlight God's mercy while at the same time downplaying the seriousness of the event so that it seems all were healed.[17] In 18.20-25, he does not deny the slaughter in the wilderness, but neither does he underline the role of God. Rather, in 18.20-25, *Wisdom* stresses the personification of Wrath in the Numbers account. Instead of the work of God, then, the sage focuses on the work of Wrath. But does Wrath represent God? Such a question brings us back to the debate on the relationship of Wrath and Logos.

3. The Relationship of Wrath and Logos

As mentioned above, there is question as to whether the personifications of Wrath and Logos are the same figure, so that Wrath, like Logos, should be seen as an agent of divine punishment. In the original narrative in Numbers and in the parallel passage in *Wisdom* 16, Wrath does, like Logos, seem to represent God (either as his attribute or an angelic agent). Nevertheless, there are problems with seeing this as the case in 18.20-25.

One of these problems that scholars usually bring up is the fact that the source and character of this personification appear to differ from the source and character of the divine Word in the previous verses. For example, rather than boldly wielding the sword of God's command, the Destroyer yields and cowers before the weapons of the blameless man, whose ministry is based upon the divine oaths and covenants given to the patriarchs.[18] Moreover,

17 Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 401.

18 That is, his ministry recalls God's promise of descendents to the patriarchs, which now stands threatened by the pursuit to exterminate their race [Larcher, *Sagesse*, 1033].

according to Carl Grim, it hardly seems likely that the sage would refer to Wrath and Death as παντοδύναμός as he does earlier to Logos.[19]

Here we believe that our previous investigations of other personifications in *Wisdom* support the idea that Wrath should *not* be seen as an agent of God. First of all, the sage uses personified Wrath and Death interchangeably. However, as we saw in chapter 3, personified Death is not an agent of God. Instead, the sage continues to stress that Death stands over against God's character and his creation. God did not make death but created humanity for incorruption (1.13-14; 2.23). He does not desire for any to perish and made people in the image of his eternity (1.13-14; 2.23). God's righteousness does not have a trace of Death and neither does his creation contain a throne for him (1.14-15). Despite all these things, Death entered into the world (1.16; 2.24). In contrast to Death as the lover and king of fools, we saw in chapter 4 that Creation is the champion and protector of the righteous. It is not surprising then to see righteous Aaron as a champion of Israel being clothed in the whole Cosmos (ἐνδύματος ἦν ὅλος ὁ κόσμος) as he confronts Death who yields in return.

Moreover, in the last chapter, we saw that Philo presents personified Logos as the one who stands before the living and the dead and puts an end to this wilderness plague. So also here, with the Logos in his hand, standing before the dead and making a way for the living, Aaron defeated Wrath.[20] Logos, then, is placed in contrast to Wrath, the Destroyer.

However, how can the sage at one moment identify Logos as the Destroyer (18.15-17) and in the verses immediately following use it as a weapon against the Destroyer (18.20-25)? As we also saw in chapter 5, there is a parallel with Logos in *Wisdom* and the *Memra* in the Targums, where in the same passage, the rabbis personify God's Memra as the slayer of the first-born of Egypt but his Word as the protector of Israel from the Destroyer. It seems likely here that the sage also personifies Logos as the destroyer of Egypt in the former passage but then refers to the Word as the weapon which Aaron uses to save Israel from the Destroyer in the next. Therefore, Logos should not be identified with Wrath but considered to be in contrast to her.

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19 Carl Ludwig Wilibald Grimm, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1860), 287.

20 One can see a similar idea in Philo's example of Phinehas, Aaron's grandson. "And this endured, until Phinehas, the peaceful one and evident priest of God, came as a champion on his own accord. By nature, he is a hater of evil and possesses zeal for good things; therefore, taking up the barbed lance, the extremely sharp Logos… he used mighty strength to pierce passion through the womb, so that no longer should such a supernatural evil be born," [Philo, *Mut.* 108]. Like the sage's depiction of Aaron, Philo presents Phinehas as a servant of God and champion of Israel who puts an end to the plague by wielding the Logos as his weapon.

4. The Test of Wrath (Wis. 18.25)

[25] τούτοις εἶξεν ὁ ὀλεθρεύων ταῦτα δὲ ἐφοβήθη (-θησαν)[21] ἦν γὰρ μόνη ἡ πεῖρα τῆς ὀργῆς ἱκανη	25: to these things the Destroyer yielded, and he was afraid of these things/ Israel feared these things, for the test of Wrath alone was being sufficient.

According to the sage, the reason that the Destroyer yielded to Aaron is that the test of Wrath alone was being sufficient. But for whom was the test sufficient—God, Israel, or Wrath? The answer to this question depends upon whether one takes the Destroyer or Israel as the subject of the verb "feared."[22] If one takes the Destroyer as the subject of the first verb—"the Destroyer yielded to these things"—then the most natural reading of the following stanza is "the Destroyer was afraid of these things." With this reading, however, it is more difficult to make sense of the connecting γάρ. How does the phrase "for the test of Wrath alone was being enough" explain why the Destroyer feared and yielded to the weapons of Aaron?[23]

If one takes the variant, "Israel feared these things," the interpretation of the verse is smoother—the instructive purpose for why Israel tasted Wrath had been fulfilled, *for* they had learned reverence. So Gregg concludes: "The people feared, because no more wrath was needed to awaken them than the mere preliminary taste of death."[24] This experience could then be sufficient for God in that it taught the lesson he sought to teach his people, and for Israel in that they learned this lesson.[25] However, this interpretation is not without its problems. For example, Scarpat demonstrates the odd nature of Israel fearing "these things" (ταῦτα) which the Jews had nothing to fear.[26]

Scholars tend to argue for one of the two explanations above. However, there is another way to answer this question. We can take the Destroyer rather than God as the one who tests (so that the test of Wrath is Wrath's test). Such a conception follows Heinrich Seesemann's conclusion that with the word πεῖρα, the thought developed from God as the one who tests and forces humanity to

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21 B-S* C 637, 46, 157, 443, 547, 728 verss.p.

22 Concerning the textual variant see Joseph Ziegler, ed., *Sapientia Salomonis,* 2nd ed., (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1980), 163; A.T.S. Goodrick, *The Book of Wisdom* (London: Rivingtons, 1913), 364; and Larcher, *Sagesse*, 1040.

23 To this question, Farrar gives the unclear answer: had the wrath not been enough, then "the High priest's robes would not have been sufficient enough to terrify the destroyer," [Farrar, *Wisdom*, 530].

24 Gregg, *Wisdom*, 56.

25 Since a similar result is found in the conclusion of the parallel passage in *Wisdom* 16, one can see why a later scribe would modify the verb (i.e. making it plural rather than singular) for the sake of rendering the text more consistent and coherent.

26 Scarpat, *Sapienza*, 297.

decide between right or wrong to that of the adversary of God as the one who tests humanity by forcing them to decide for or against God.[27]

If this is the case here, then the latter interpretation of educational value can be maintained without changing the subject to Israel. The test alone was sufficient for Wrath because Israel had passed the test causing the personification to yield. Moreover, the test could be sufficient for God as well. That is to say, in spite of Wrath's test of Israel, the experience served to prove Israel.

Such an interpretation reflects the wisdom tradition in which suffering serves to educate the righteous even though there is never any real danger of righteous Israel failing this test; Israel will be approved.[28] The sage has already introduced this idea with the oppression of wicked humanity. For example, in 2.17-18, the fools test the righteous to the point of death to see if they truly belong to God, which the sage later redefines from a new perspective—the suffering of the pious actually serves as God's refining fire and their deaths as a whole-burnt offering (3.5-6).

Therefore, from one perspective, the righteous are tested by Wrath as they suffer evil; however, from the sage's perspective, God approves the elect through the experience. In short, there is a paradox here: the experience of Wrath was not punishment for sinners but a test for holy Israel. God is not the cause of the event, but the event still remains within his sovereign control.[29] The confusion of this passage is brought about by the sage's desire to distance God from the evil experience and simultaneously to demonstrate God's plan for allowing it to occur, which leads us to the purposes for the personification.

5. The Purposes for the Personification of Wrath

To distance God and exonerate Israel

There are times in the OT, where the wrath of God is hard to understand, "let alone calculate or measure, its exercise, duration or end." [30] Johannes Fichtner concludes:

> Even the cause and reason may sometimes be enwrapped in complete obscurity, so that to the eye of man, wrath and injustice seem very close to one another.[31]

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27 Heinrich Seesemann, "ΠΕΙΡΑ," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1958), 25.

28 Ibid., 26.

29 Larcher, *Sagesse*, 1028.

30 Johannes Fichtner, "ΟΡΓΗ," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 408.

For this reason, there were those who struggled with instances where God's wrath seemed unjust or too severe.[32] Philo is an example of one of these. At times Philo refers to God's anger as that which guilty men incite and as that which interrupts his abundant provision;[33] while at other times, he defiantly declares that God does not become angry at all.[34] Moreover, Philo goes great lengths to explain why the Lord cursed Canaan rather than the actual sinner, Ham, in Gen. 9.25.[35]

As we have seen, the author of *Wisdom* wrestles with the concept of God's wrath as well, particularly that which falls upon righteous Israel. In our research we have learned that one reason people personify is in order "to make the world make sense to us on a human scale."[36] So here, with the personification of Wrath, the sage seeks on his own theological scale to make sense of God, history and scripture. How could scripture record a time in Israel's history when the all-patient God so violently attacked his own righteous people?

In order to conceal the awkward gap[37] within this matrix which holds Israel as righteous, the sage uses personification to provide a new religious insight[38] which differs from the original account. In contrast to the original narrative, the real cause of Israel's plague is the personification of Wrath, Death, the Destroyer—*not* God.[39] We saw in 1.16 and 2.24 that the sage used

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31 Ibid. See also Oskar Grether and Johannes Fichtner, "ὈΡΓΗ," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 412-418 and Gary A. Herion, "Wrath of God (OT)," in *ABD* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 991-995.

32 E.g. Lamentations and 4 Ezra. According to Crenshaw, Gen. 18.17-33—where the Lord is on his way to destroy all of Sodom and Gomorrah, including the righteous, until Abraham intercedes on their behalf—is an example of a response to those who accuse God of wrath that is unjust or too severe. "The subsequent angelic removal of all 'righteous' people from the doomed cities protects Yahweh from the accusation of injustice, even if the Yahwist did not press God to an admission that one innocent person could spare the city [James L. Crenshaw, "Popular Questioning of the Justice of God," *ZAW* 82 (1970), 385].

33 See Philo, *Som*. 2.177-79; *Mos*. 1.6.

34 Such a description then comes either as a concession from the OT in order to instruct the ignorant (*Quod Deus* 52-54; *Som* 1.234-236) or as an act of foolishness upon those who attribute to God the very parts and passions which are inconsistent with the divine character (*Sac*. 94-96).

35 Philo, *Sob*. 31-48.

36 See Craig A. Hamilton, "Mapping the mind and the body: on W.H. Auden's personifications," *Style* 36, no. 3 (2002), 408-427.

37 See F.M. Cornford, *Principium Sapientiae* (Gloucester, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1971), 30.

38 See Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt* (Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1991), 27.

39 "Manifestement, l'auteur a voulu soustraire à une causalité divine immediate le fléau qui décima Israel au desert*"* [Larcher, *Sagesse*, 1041]. This same strategy of trying to distance God from evil may explain the difference between the MT of Exod. 5.3 and the LXX version. In the latter, Israel entreats Pharaoh to allow them to go worship Yahweh, lest Death meet them face to face. The MT, however, does not personify Death in the verse; instead, the fear is *not* that Death might approach them, but that Yahweh might—with pestilence and sword.

the personification of Death to exonerate God from evil in the world. If the sage is consistent, which he seems to be here, then the personification serves a similar goal: it distances God from the destruction of righteous Israel. Therefore, our inference lines up with Larcher who concludes that in order to avoid the appearance of divine anger as arbitrary and unjustified, the sage resorts to personification so that the event now results from a *préternaturelle* cause instead.[40]

With this done, both God and Israel are exonerated—the former remains just and the latter, righteous. That is to say, since Wrath is no longer an agent of God, the experience in the wilderness was not the punishment of Israel by God for their sins, nor was it undeserved punishment of the righteous by God.[41] Rather, Israel is both victim to Wrath and through the Word and the World, victors over it. And although God is not the cause of the experience, in the end, the event alone was serving as a sufficient test to prove the righteous before God.

To foster ethnic pride

Another purpose of this personification is found in light of the whole of *Wisdom* 18 which falls within the entire Egypt/Israel antithesis in *Wisdom* 11-19. In chapter 4, we saw how the sage uses the personification of Creation in this contrast. Furthermore, as we place our investigations of the personification of Logos and Wrath side by side, we see that the sage maintains this pattern so that the personification of Logos against the Egyptians serves as a foil to the personification of Wrath upon Israel. Whereas the all-powerful Logos totally destroyed the Egyptians, Israel overcame Wrath with the Logos.[42]

Therefore, to contrast the enemies of God and the elect, the sage uses personification to paint with broad strokes, to accentuate the destruction of the former and to amplify the victory of the latter, all the while downplaying Israel's sin. As is characteristic of *Wisdom* 11-19, then, the overcoming of the personification of Wrath serves to foster ethnic pride in the face of the Egyptians who were defeated by the personification of Logos.[43]

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40 Ibid., 1027-1028. So also Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 403.

41 According to the sage, it is impossible for God to be unjust (Wis. 12.15).

42 See Larcher, *Sagesse*, 1033.

43 For discussions concerning the tension of universalism and particularism in *Wisdom*, see Randall D. Chestnutt, "Covenant and Cosmos in Wisdom of Solomon 10-19," in *The Concept of the Covenant in the Second Temple Period*, ed. Stanley E. Porter (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 223-249; J.J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 220-221; J.J. Collins, *Jewish Cult and Hellenistic Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 156; and Michael Kolarcik, "Universalism and Justice," in *Treasures of Wisdom: Festschrift for M. Gilbert*, ed. N. Claduch-Benages (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999), 289-301.

Conclusion

In sum, the sage struggles with the original depiction of an angry God and a rebellious Israel in the wilderness. To avoid these embarrassing passages, at one point the sage retells the story of God's sending serpents to destroy Israel. Now divine wrath is recast as deliberate and controlled for the sake of teaching Israel rather than punishing them. However to address the outburst where God in his wrath seeks to destroy all of Israel, the sage stresses the role of the personification of Wrath.

From our investigations of the personifications of Death, Creation and Logos, we inferred that the sage uses the personification to distance God from the event while maintaining the righteousness of Israel. We concluded that our research supports the view that Wrath, in contrast to Logos in the previous passage, should *not* be seen as a representative of divine punishment. Therefore, God is not responsible for the slaughter, which occurs as a sufficient test for Israel rather than as judgment. In contrast to the all-powerful Logos who destroyed Egypt without hindrance, Wrath's attack on Israel was foiled by Aaron, who wore Creation and wielded Logos as he fought against the Destroyer.

Having now discussed these major personifications in *Wisdom*, we shall turn our attention to the foremost personification in *Wisdom*, Sophia, and those other personifications directly related to her.

Chapter 7

The Personifications of Wisdom

Introduction

So far we have seen that the sage personifies Death and Wrath to distance God from the origin and work of evil. Furthermore, he personifies Creation and Logos to promise a future retribution for evil people and a remedy from their persecution. Now, we shall investigate the personification of Wisdom and those in close relationship to her (if not synonymous with her),[1] namely, the Spirit, Dynamis, and Dike from Wis. 1.3-9 (1) and Lady Virtue from Wis. 4.1-2 (2).

Thereafter, in order to find any common themes, we shall survey those chapters dominated by Sophia, *Wisdom* 6-11 (3). Finally, by looking at Sophia in light of the other personifications, we shall infer that the sage personifies Sophia in order to present two paths in life and to encourage the righteous in the midst of suffering (4).

1. Power, Justice and the Spirit of Wisdom (Wis. 1.3-9)

[3] σκολιοὶ γὰρ λογισμοὶ χωρίζουσιν ἀπὸ θεοῦ,
δοκιμαζομένη τε ἡ Δύναμις ἐλέγχει τοὺς
ἄφρονας.
[4] ὅτι εἰς κακότεχνον ψυχὴν οὐκ εἰσελεύσεται
Σοφία οὐδὲ κατοικήσει ἐν σώματι κατάχρεῳ
ἁμαρτίας.
[5] ἅγιον γὰρ Πνεῦμα παιδείας φεύξεται δόλον
καὶ ἀπαναστήσεται ἀπὸ λογισμῶν ἀσυνέτων
καὶ ἐλεγχθήσεται ἐπελθούσης ἀδικίας.
[6] φιλάνθρωπον γὰρ πνεῦμα Σοφία καὶ οὐκ
ἀθῳώσει βλάσφημον ἀπὸ χειλέων αὐτοῦ· ὅτι
τῶν νεφρῶν αὐτοῦ μάρτυς ὁ θεὸς καὶ τῆς
καρδίας αὐτοῦ ἐπίσκοπος ἀληθὴς καὶ τῆς

3: For crooked thoughts separate one from God and proven Power condemns the foolish.
4: For Sophia will not enter into an evil-working soul neither will she dwell in a body involved[2] in sin.
5: For the holy Spirit of Instruction will flee from deceit; it will stand up and walk away from foolish reasoning and will be ashamed at the coming of unrighteousness.
6: For Sophia is a spirit who loves people; and she will not allow any blasphemy which comes from the lips to go unpunished, because God is a witness of human thoughts—a true overseer

1 See Section II Introduction.

2 Possibly "mortgaged to sin," see David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979), 102; Ernest G. Clarke, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 14.

γλώσσης ἀκουστής.
7 ὅτι πνεῦμα κυρίου πεπλήρωκεν τὴν οἰκουμένην, καὶ τὸ συνέχον τὰ πάντα γνῶσιν ἔχει φωνῆς.
8 διὰ τοῦτο φθεγγόμενος ἄδικα οὐδεὶς μὴ λάθῃ, οὐδὲ μὴ παροδεύσῃ αὐτὸν ἐλέγχουσα ἡ Δίκη.
9 ἐν γὰρ διαβουλίοις ἀσεβοῦς ἐξέτασις ἔσται, λόγων δὲ αὐτοῦ ἀκοὴ πρὸς κύριον ἥξει εἰς ἔλεγχον ἀνομημάτων αὐτοῦ·

of their heart and hearer of their tongue.
7: For the spirit of the Lord has filled the inhabited world and the one who holds all things together knows all that is spoken.
8: Therefore, no one who utters unrighteous words shall escape notice: neither will Reproving Justice pass them by.
9: For by the deliberations of the impious, there will be an examination and the report of their words will rise before the Lord as the conviction of their crimes.

After the sage implores his audience to love righteousness and seek the Lord, he introduces Dynamis,[3] Sophia, the Spirit and Dike[4] to explain the reasons for these commands. The personifications either flee from and avoid (vv. 4-5) or rebuke and convict (vv. 3, 6-9) those who disobey.[5] For example, Sophia avoids the ungodly, and the Spirit flees[6] from them.[7] Dynamis condemns (ἐλέγχει) fools, while reproving Dike (ἐλέγχουσα ἡ δίκη) refuses to pass them by, so that the sinners' own thoughts and words shall rise up on examination day to convict (ἔλεγχον) them for their crimes.[8] Similarly in Wis. 11.20, the sage considers Dike pursuing the wicked so that they could be destroyed by a πνεύματος δυνάμεώς.[9]

The personifications demonstrate three sides of God: 1) his holiness, which will have nothing to do with unrighteousness (e.g. Sophia); 2) his sovereignty, which sustains and knows all things (e.g. the Spirit); and 3) his judgment, which is unavoidable (vv. 3, 9). In the course of the following

3 Cf. James M. Reese, *The Book of Wisdom, Song of Songs* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983), 31; where he says that Dynamis is a proper name for God. Reese also believes that Dike is a proper name for God (p. 33).

4 Cf. Philo, *Flacc.* 18.

5 According to Kolarcik, the sage has the image of a trial in mind [Michael Kolarcik, *The Ambiguity of Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-6* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991), 64-67].

6 See Winston, who translates this phrase as "is driven away by evil," [Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 103].

7 Later, the sage pairs Sophia and the Spirit to say that without them it is impossible to understand God (9.17).

8 Schmitt argues that the sage is drawing from Greek mythology here, where Dike, the daughter of Zeus is the "Göttin der Strafgerechtigkeit" who "bringt alles ans Licht," [Armin Schmitt, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Würzburg: Verlag, 1989), 20]. Her actions in *Wisdom* do in fact parallel the role of Dike in Hesiod, who presents the goddess as the pure virgin who sits besides Zeus and gives him reports on people's sins and their evil hearts, [Hesiod, *Theogony* 902; *Op. et Dies* 256-264]. For more on Dike as an avenger, see Kolarcik, *Ambiguity*, 66; and Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 105. Cf. Acts 28.4.

9 Cf. Ps. 18.15 (17.16).

chapters, the sage will expound on these three themes and use personifications to illustrate them.

The chief purposes of these personifications, then, are to motivate the audience to love righteousness and to seek the Lord. If they refuse to pursue righteousness, these personifications, like Creation and Logos, ensure judgment—a life without Wisdom and a future examination without mercy. In short, these personifications "make resoundingly evident what cannot possibly be mistaken,"[10] namely, ignoring the sage's commands leads to an inescapable judgment.[11]

Despite the fact that the first chapter of *Wisdom* is full of personifications, scholars have not focused on the key role the trope plays in this chapter. After the sage's initial commands, personifications dominate the following verses. As we have seen here, the author begins by discussing how the personifications of God's Spirit and Wisdom flee from the thoughts, words and actions of fools and how the personifications of God's justice rebuke them.

If the actions of these personifications were not enough to motivate the audience to obey, alternatively (as we considered earlier) the chapter ends with a discussion of how the personification of Death responds to the thoughts, words and actions of fools. In contrast to the former personifications, the nemesis does not flee from the ungodly: he comes near to them. Neither does Destruction rebuke the fools: he establishes a covenant with them.

2. The March of Lady Virtue (Wis. 4.1-2)

Scholars generally agree that Lady Virtue is analogous to Lady Wisdom. Arete first appears in the context of Wis. 3.1-4.20, where the sage redefines the reality of three experiences of suffering: 1) martyrdom, 2) barrenness, and 3) untimely death.[12] In reality, each of these experiences produces a positive result: the martyr becomes proven, the person who dies young receives safety from corruption, and the barren obtain Lady Virtue. Since the last of these passages contains a personification, we shall focus our attention on it alone.

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10 The purpose of personification according to Edwin Honig, *Dark Conceit: the Making of Allegory* (London: Faber and Faber, 1959), 116. See also the purpose of amplification in *Rhet. ad Her.* IV.LIII.66.

11 Reese correctly concludes that this refers to the final day of judgment [Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 31].

12 According to Cheon, these three groups represent antitheses to groups from their persecutors—the wicked husbands, wives and children [Samuel Cheon, "Three Characters in the Wisdom of Solomon 3-4," *JSP* 12, no. 1 (2001), 105-113].

[1]κρείσσων ἀτεκνία μετὰ ἀρετῆς· ἀθανασία γάρ ἐστιν ἐν μνήμῃ αὐτῆς, ὅτι καὶ παρὰ θεῷ γινώσκεται καὶ παρὰ ἀνθρώποις.
[2]παροῦσάν τε μιμοῦνται αὐτὴν καὶ ποθοῦσιν ἀπελθοῦσαν· καὶ ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι στεφανηφοροῦσα πομπεύει τὸν τῶν ἀμιάντων ἄθλων ἀγῶνα νικήσασα.

1: Greater is barrenness with Virtue; for immortality is in memory[13] of her, because she is known before both God and men.
2: They imitate her while she is present and long for her after she is gone;
and in this age, having been victorious in the battle for undefiled prizes, she adorns her crown and marches in a triumphal procession.

Contrasting the barren-but-godly with the fertile-but-wicked,[14] the sage argues here against the ancient near eastern idea that a person's status was affected by infertility, which was often seen as the result of sin.[15] The sage rejects traditional dogmas that consider fertility the sign of blessing (see Deut. 28.4, 11) and infertility the result of sin (see Deut. 28.18).[16] Indeed, "there is a far cry from this exhortation of childlessness to the old Hebrew ideal of abundance of offspring."[17]

Despite appearances then, the barren but godly are the blessed ones. It is they who have the promise of reward at God's visitation. Rather than negative connotations usually associated with barrenness, "la vertu confère une valeur positive à l'*ateknia*."[18] In contrast, the offspring of the ungodly[19] will be reckoned as nothing: no matter how long their days, the only things they have to look forward to are dishonour, hopelessness and pain.

Having said this, *Wisdom* reiterates the superiority of the barren-but-godly by redefining reality. The barren are actually better off since, even though they may not have offspring, they possess Lady Virtue (Ἀρετή).[20] Although the children of adultery will be forgotten, Lady Virtue will always be remembered. In contrast to the dishonour that awaits the ungodly (3.17), Arete is honoured, imitated when present and longed for when absent. Wearing a crown of

13 See Reese, who argues that "ἐν μνήμῃ" here does not refer to human recall but to "the saving sense of being known by God," [Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 49].

14 Cf. Isa. 56.4; Sir. 16.1-3.

15 David Winston, "Theodicy in the Wisdom of Solomon," in *Theodicy in the World of the Bible*, ed. Antti Laato and J.C. De Moor (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 531. E.g. 1 Enoch 98.5: "neither is a woman created barren; but because of the work of her hands she is disgraced with childlessness."

16 The sage also overturns the law which excluded the eunuch from the assembly (Deut. 23.1). See J.A.F. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), 30.

17 Joseph Reider, *The Book of Wisdom* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957), 80.

18 Chrysostome Larcher, *Le Livre de La Sagesse*, 3 vols., vol. 2 (Paris: Gabalda, 1984), 315.

19 According to Reider, this view is in contrast to the mitigation of the doctrine of hereditary sin in Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 18 [Reider, *Wisdom*, 76, 79].

20 For Virtue as the mediator between God and humanity, see Kolarcik, *Ambiguity*, 91.

victory,[21] she emerges as a conqueror in the fight for undefiled prizes[22] and marches in a triumphal procession.[23] In short, she provides true fulfilment for life, promising women a fertility greater than that of carnal fecundity.[24]

Rather than associating virtue with families as was done by other Greco-Roman authors, [25] the sage connects Virtue with childlessness.[26] In an attempt to convince his audience that having virtue is more valuable than having a child[27]—a formidable task no doubt—the sage employs personification as he seeks to persuade the reader that Lady Virtue has her own progeny.[28] Thereby, with the personification, he seeks to "shatter the conventional theological tradition"[29] that offspring is a sign of blessedness in order to provide a new orientation for life which lessens the pain, frustration and shame arising from such a state. With Lady Virtue, then, the sage contrasts the world of appearance and experience with what he believes is the world of reality in order to maintain his system of beliefs,[30] namely that suffering is not the result of sin. Lady Virtue turns the problem on its head: now rather than a problem it is a paradox. [31]

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21 Reese compares this with the fools who wear fading crowns of rosebuds in Wis. 2.8 [Reese, Book of Wisdom, 49].

22 According to Larcher, this alludes not to victory in battle, but victory in the games [Larcher, *Sagesse*, 317]. See also Schmitt who narrows this down to the Olympic games [Schmitt, *Weisheit*, 29].

23 Cf. 2 Macc. 6.7 and 4 Macc. 17.15.

24 Larcher, *Sagesse*, 314. Cf. Plato, *Symp.* 209a.

25 E.g Horace, *Odes* III.24; Plato, *Symp.* 209a-209c; Philo, *Som.* 178. Although not childlessness, there is also a connexion between virtue and virginity in the Greco-Roman world; for more on this see, Larcher, *Sagesse*, 314.

26 See also Philo, *Det.* 59, where he refers to Sarai as Virtue.

27 In contrast to Reese, with Lady Virtue, the sage is *not* so much "simply multiplying motives for fidelity to God" as much as he is addressing issues of theodicy. Cf. Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 49.

28 See the second purpose of personifications according to T.B.L. Webster, "Personification as a Mode of Greek Thought," *JWCI* 17 (1954), 10.

29 See the purpose of metaphor according to Leo G. Perdue, *Wisdom in Revolt* (Sheffield: The Almond Press, 1991), 27.

30 See the purposes of personification in Honig, *Dark Conceit*, 117, 179.

31 This appeal to virtue to redefine suffering is also a strategy used by Seneca. For example, even though Nature can unfairly give his friend, Claranus, a feeble body as a home for a great soul—'With her great glory, Virtue hallows any body in which she dwells.' In fact, the only reason Nature gives such men frail statures is to prove that Virtue can flourish anywhere (*Ep.* LXVI.1-3). While Seneca does not deflect from the problem of barrenness to the virtue, he does deflect from the early death of a child to virtue, [Seneca, *Ep.* LXXIV, 30-33]. Seneca also speaks of the proud march of Virtue when, for example, martyrs unflinchingly face death as they willingly place their hands into the flames, as they confront their torturers with a smile and as without a tear they endure the funeral of their child (*Ep.* LXXVI.20-21).

3. A Survey of *Wisdom* 6-11

Of the attaining of wisdom, Job finds little hope for success (Job 28) while Qoheleth expresses frustration that God has placed such a futile desire in human hearts in the first place (Ecc. 3.11).[32] In contrast, however, the sage "disdainfully dismisses every trace of pessimism or exasperation" for the pursuit of wisdom.[33] Rather, he calls the audience to embrace Sophia as the way to immortality, since she is easily beheld by those who love her and quickly found by those who seek her. In fact, she seeks to make herself known to humanity so much that she sits beside their gates and graciously meets them on their path as they go (6.12-20).[34]

For the sage, Wisdom is no longer a proverb nor advice about conduct. Rather, in *Wisdom*, Sophia has now become a "cosmic dimension (as the world soul), a personal dimension (as a female figure), and a historical dimension (as God's agent in Israel's history)."[35] These three dimensions of Sophia unfold in *Wisdom* 6-10. In *Wisdom* 6, she is the way to eternal life; in *Wisdom* 7, the emanation of God and co-creator of his universe. She is the bringer of all good gifts in *Wisdom* 8, the key to understanding in *Wisdom* 9, and the deliverer from suffering in *Wisdom* 10.

Since Sophia is a storehouse of innumerable treasures (7.14), her account in *Wisdom* deserves a monograph of its own. We must, however, limit our research to focus only upon the primary roles the sage gives her, and how she relates to the other personifications within the book. Rather than providing translations here, we shall survey these chapters highlighting her main roles and comparing her to other personifications at relevant points. Once this has been done, we will propose a purpose for personified *Wisdom* in light of her relationship with the other personifications considered in this chapter.

Lady Wisdom leads to an eternal kingdom (*Wisdom* 6)

Although Sophia first appears in *Wisdom* 1, her prominence in the book begins here in *Wisdom* 6, where the author admonishes the rulers for the first time since his introduction. The most notable reason for his admonishment to listen

32 David Winston, "Wisdom in the Wisdom of Solomon," in *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie*, ed. Leo G. Perdue (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1993), 149.

33 Ibid.

34 For a comparison of Sophia in *Wisdom* with the Gnostic Sophia, see B.J.L. Peerbolte, "The *Wisdom of Solomon* and the Gnostic Sophia," in *The Wisdom of Egypt: Essays in Honour of Gerard P. Luttikhuizen*, ed. Anthony Hilhorst and George H. van Kooten (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 97-114.

35 Daniel J. Harrington, *Invitation to the Apocrypha* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 78.

and learn is the personification of Wisdom, the way to immortality and path to an everlasting kingdom.[36] For this reason, the sage entreats the hearers not only to hearken to his words, but also to yearn for them, as these words lead to instruction and to Lady Wisdom, who is readily accessible. No one in pursuit of her will fall short of the goal, since the one requirement for obtaining her is simply the desire to do so. In fact, she even initiates the pursuit, seeking those worthy of her, meeting them in every thought. One only needs to look outside the window: she sits beside their gate.

Through the rhetorical device of *sorites*,[37] the sage proclaims that Wisdom is the way to salvation. Since, the desire for Wisdom leads one to participate in the kingdom of God, they should honour Sophia and be instructed by her, so that they can reign forever—only then shall they have an apology on the day of judgment (v. 21, 25); only then shall they be safe from the personifications of justice mentioned in *Wisdom* 1. Therefore, the primary role Lady Wisdom plays in this chapter is to seek those who desire her and through instruction to lead them to reign in an everlasting kingdom with God.

By examining Sophia in light of the personifications in *Wisdom* 1, we observe the striking parallels in these chapters which scholars have not tended to take into account. In both *Wisdom* 1 and 6, the sage uses personification to explain why his audience should obey his commands. Whereas in the former chapter, the sage reasons that they should obey because Wisdom avoids the unrighteous,[38] here he urges them to obey because Wisdom pursues the righteous. In other words, the personifications demonstrate both the negative consequences of disobedience on the one hand (*Wisdom* 1) and the positive results of obedience on the other (*Wisdom* 6).

There are also direct contrasts with the personification of Death in chapter 1 and that of Sophia here. For example, just as Death made his way to the fools who longed for him (1.16), so also Sophia appears to the wise who love her (6.12). Moreover, whereas the fools made a pact with Death because they are worthy of him (1.16), Sophia seeks those worthy of her (6.16). Therefore, the relationship with personified Death serves as a foil for the relationship with personified Wisdom.

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36 Other reasons include: their power is from the same God who will examine their works and search their intentions, they have *not* walked according to the council of the Lord and the judgment of God is imminent and severe. The rulers will find no partiality from God. Rather, the Lord will judge the strong even stronger.

37 She is the beginning of the *desire for instruction*, and the *desire for instruction* is *love*. *Love* is keeping *the laws* of the Lady. Keeping her *laws* is the conformation of incorruptibility, which is to be made near to God (6.17-19).

38 Although there are no personifications of judgment in this chapter, the sage still warns against an examination of their deeds and against terrible condemnation (6.3, 5).

Lady Wisdom equips the friends and prophets of God (*Wisdom* 7)

Next, the sage takes it upon himself to reveal who Lady Wisdom is and how she came to be.[39] In order to explore the depths of Wisdom, the sage, in the persona of Solomon,[40] sets up his own experience as a paradigm for those who seek her. He chose her over power and regarded her as more valuable than riches, which are mere sand compared to her. He loved her more than physical vitality and even preferred her unfading brilliance to the light of day. When Sophia came to him, she came with her hands full of all good things.[41] In addition to this, Sophia is an unfailing storehouse, and those who partake of the treasures within, receive both commendation and friendship from God (v. 14).[42] Moreover, Sophia is an instructor of all knowledge,[43] the crafter of all things (ἡ πάντων τεχνῖτις).

The author next lists twenty-one words to characterise her,[44] followed by a comparison of her to the cosmic forces and an explanation of her relationship with God. Sophia is the out-flowing of his power, the emanation of his glory, the effulgence of his light, the spotless reflection of his work, and the image of his goodness which both pervades all things and makes them new.[45] All-encompassing, all-controlling Sophia even surpasses both the light of the Sun and the night of wickedness.[46] Immanent with holy souls, Wisdom equips the friends and prophets of God, since the Lord only loves those who live with her (vv. 27-28).

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39 Contra Job 28.12-28 and Sir. 1.1-7.

40 For a discussion of the reasons why the sage chose to impersonate Solomon, see Judith H. Newman, "The Democratization of Kingship in Wisdom of Solomon," in *The Idea of Biblical Interpretation: Essays in Honor of James L. Kugel*, ed. Hindy Najman (Leiden: Brill, 2004), 309-328.

41 Cf. 1 Kings 3 and Josephus, *Ant.* 8.2.1. For the picture of Sophia as a mother here, see Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 80. Reider compares this with Philo's depiction of Wisdom in *Ebr.* 8, where he calls her the bride of God and mother of all [Reider, *Wisdom*, 110-111].

42 See Reese, who argues that Wisdom's treasures serve as a motive to reject the appeal of Hellenistic philosophy [Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 74-75].

43 Cf. 1 Kings 4.32-34. According to Crenshaw these are the fundamental subjects comprising the curriculum in the Gymnasium [James L. Crenshaw, *Old Testament Wisdom* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 168].

44 For the significance of the number 21, see Reider, *Wisdom*, 114; and Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 178-180.

45 The sage has a "holistic understanding of the presence of God, which embraces nature, world history, and the destiny of believers. The sage creates no dichotomy between what later theologians call the order of nature and the order of grace, but sees Lady Wisdom as active in both," [Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 84].

46 See Reese's translation: "The radiance which comes from her never sleeps," [Ibid., 80].

Lady Wisdom provides knowledge and comfort (*Wisdom* 8)

In *Wisdom* 8, the author discusses the praise (vv. 3-8), benefits (vv. 9-18), and pursuit (vv. 19-21) of Wisdom. In contrast to the fool's illicit love for Death (*Wisdom* 1-2), the sage confesses his love for Sophia, whom he sought out to be his bride. The sage is not alone in this adoration; God, the master of all things, also lives with and loves Sophia, who is privy to his divine mysteries. If one prizes wealth, Sophia is richer than riches; if it is insight, she is the greatest craftswoman of all;[47] if it is righteousness, she is the teacher of righteousness as well as the other most superior virtues[48]—self-control, insight and courage.[49] If one seeks great experiences, Lady Wisdom knows things of old and portrays things to come; she possesses the solution to riddles[50] and has foreknowledge of signs and seasons.

As his bride, she dwells with the sage as a counsellor, there for him in times of worry and sorrow. Because of her, the sage will receive glory and honour before the multitude and the elders,[51] since she makes him swift in judgment and authoritative in speech. Like Lady Virtue in 4.1-2, Sophia provides eternal benefits: everlasting life (ἀθανασία) and an unending legacy (μνήμην αἰώνιον). Lady Wisdom even brings her benefits to bed—sleeping with her brings joy, and intimacy (φιλία) with her brings enjoyment, wealth, insight and repute.[52] In fact, no matter how perfect one might seem to be, without Sophia, they are reckoned as nothing.

Once again we see a contrast between the personification of Death in Wis. 1.16 and Sophia. Whereas the fools pine after Death and consider him their lover, the sage becomes enamoured of Wisdom's beauty and pursues her as his bride (vv. 2, 16). In contrast to the fools who make a covenant with Death, the sage makes Sophia his partner (v. 9). In contrast to a relationship with Death, ἀθανασία ἐστὶν ἐν συγγενείᾳ σοφίας (v. 17).

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47 According to Reese, aside from the disputed text of Prov. 8.30, this is the only biblical text that attributes a role in creation to Lady Wisdom (see also vv. 5-6), [Ibid., 93].

48 Cf. Plato, *Republic,* IV.127.

49 Reese argues that the sage maintains the sexual imagery here so that πόνοι refers to labour pangs of Sophia, who gives birth to virtues for her lovers [Reese, *Book of Wisdom,* 95]. Rather than anguish, her offspring brings character. Similarly, Philo, in *Congr.* 14, says he has intercourse with Grammar the handmaiden of Wisdom, which resulted in his lover bearing him three children, namely Writing, Reading, and History, [Reider, *Wisdom*, 118].

50 Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 8.5.3.

51 Josephus depicts the people privately laughing at Solomon in light of his youth until he proved himself as wise by his solution about the children of the two prostitutes (*Ant.* 8.2.2).

52 Cf. Philo, *Leg. All*. 3.217, For Sophia's role as a seducer, lover, or erotic figure, see Lester L. Grabbe, *Wisdom of Solomon* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 68; and Alice M. Sinnott, *The Personification of Wisdom* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 158.

Lady Wisdom explains the will of God (*Wisdom* 9)

Having said these things, the sage now offers two petitions for God to send Sophia, whom he needs because of 1) his God-given responsibilities, 2) his desire to be included with God's children, 3) his inability to understand, and 4) her role in Israel's history. Since God has called the sage to be king and to build the temple as an imitation of the true holy tabernacle, the sage needs Lady Wisdom for she dwells with God and knows his works.[53] Who better to supervise the work of the temple than she who was with God when he made the world?

Sophia understands all things and knows what is pleasing in God's eyes and upright in his commands. She can guide the sage in his actions and guard him in her glory. Only then will the sage's works will be acceptable, his rule righteous and his life worthy of his father's thrones. The sage continues: a person can barely understand a handful of things without Sophia, and therefore cannot even begin to understand the counsel of God without her, nor the will of God without the holy Spirit from on high. Therefore now, "with this divine presence the situation of mortals is not hopeless. God's graciousness heals the wounds of human alienation."[54]

Finally, the sage appeals to salvation-history as the last reason for his need of Sophia. Wisdom made straight the paths of those who came before him as "they were saved by Sophia" (τῇ σοφίᾳ ἐσώθησαν). This statement leads into the next chapter.

Lady Wisdom saves from suffering (Wis. 10.1-11.1)

The author goes on to describe in detail Sophia's salvation of the heroes of Israel from Adam to the Exodus community. Rather than godly people or God himself as the agents of Israel's deliverance from suffering, Sophia serves as the subject who protects and delivers God's people from affliction.[55] The sage begins with the first-formed father of the earth, whom Lady Wisdom protected,

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53 Cf. the *Testament of Solomon* where the author presents the sage as summoning demons and forcing them to build the temple.

54 Reese, *Book of Wisdom*, 106.

55 Although similar lists cite OT heroes as examples to prove their respective points, *Wisdom* 10 is peculiar in 1) that the focus is on a personification rather than a person, 2) that Lady Wisdom focuses solely upon the champions of the Pentateuch, and 3) that the sage includes antithetical examples describing the fate of their ungodly contemporaries. E.g. 1 Macc. 2.49-60, 4 Macc. 16.20-21, Sirach 44-50, and Hebrews 11. By highlighting πίστις, Heb. 11 comes closer to Wis. 10. However, πίστις serves as a means rather than as the agent as Sophia acts in Wis. 10. However, *The Apocalypse of Sedrach* 1-2 has the closest parallel in its account of the role of divine love. Similarly, in order to emphasise Sophia, the author even leaves the godly people (i.e. the patriarchs) unnamed.

empowered to rule and delivered from transgression. She also delivered Noah as she took the helm to steer the ship and guide him to safety.

Furthermore, knowing Abram, she kept him blameless before God, and gave him the strength to bind Isaac despite his strong affections for his child. Likewise, Sophia rescued Lot from the descending fire. Here, the sage provides the reader with the prevailing principle of the chapter and "ein Leitmotiv des Buches,"[56] *Sophia saves her servants from sufferings*.[57]

To demonstrate Sophia's work of delivering the righteous from suffering further, the sage addresses Sophia's relationship with Jacob. While Jacob was fleeing as a refugee from the wrath of his brother, Lady Wisdom guided Jacob, showed him the divine kingdom and gave him knowledge of the most holy things. In spite of oppressors, she prospered him and multiplied the fruits of his labours. She delivered Jacob from his enemies and kept him safe from those ambushing him. Moreover, Sophia ruled so that he fought well at Peniel teaching him that "Godliness is more powerful than all."

Whereas the original Genesis narrative contains multiple comments ensuring God's presence with Joseph in suffering, the sage proclaims it was Sophia who was with the patriarch in his suffering. She did not abandon Joseph: she rescued him from adulterous arms and followed him into the pit. She remained with him there until she replaced his bonds with a sceptre, his slavery with authority, his temporary shame with eternal glory.

According to the sage, even the Exodus came as a result of Sophia's working through Moses; she rescued the blameless seed by performing signs and wonders. She reimbursed the former slaves for their labours, guided them through the Red Sea, and became their shelter by day and beacon by night. Moreover, Lady Wisdom drowned the enemies of Israel, casting them into the Abyss in order to provide booty for the righteous. On the other side of the Sea, Sophia opened mouths and unbound tongues in order to lead the choir in a song of praise.[58]

Furthermore, in *Wisdom* 11, Sophia prospered Israel by the hand of the holy prophet.[59] She also aided Israel: 1) in travel through the uninhabited wilderness, 2) in battle against their foes, and 3) in provision of water from a rock.[60] At this point, the sage departs from the explicit mention of Sophia and moves on to discuss principles of God's provision and punishment.[61]

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56 Burton L. Mack, *Logos und Sophia* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 80.

57 σοφία δὲ τοὺς θεραπεύοντας αὐτὴν ἐκ πόνων ἐρρύσατὸ.

58 Cf. the role of Miriam in Exod. 15.20-21.

59 Cf. Deut. 34.10.

60 See Philo, *Leg. All.* 2.86 where he identifies Wisdom as the rock.

61 The sage never discusses Lady Wisdom in depth again. He only mentions her briefly from here on out (e.g. Wis. 14.1-7).

The role of Sophia in this chapter resembles the role of personified Creation in *Wisdom* 16, 19. Creation is presented as the champion of the righteous, and Sophia takes the role as their saviour. As Creation punished the Egyptians and provided for Israel during the plagues (chap. 16), so Sophia provides for Israel and punishes Egypt during the Exodus. Furthermore, in 19.6-7, the sage attributes the cloud which covered Israel as well as the path through the Red Sea to the work of Creation; yet here, he says that Sophia was the cloud and their leader through the sea. Whereas Creation provided Israel manna and quail in the wilderness, Sophia provided them water.

4. The Purposes for the Personifications of Wisdom

To present two paths of life

One key to understanding the book of *Wisdom* is Lady Wisdom herself. She separates the fools from the wise in *Wisdom* 1-5 and the Egyptians from the Israelites in *Wisdom* 10-19. In *Wisdom* 6-9, she is both saviour[62] and the path to immortality,[63] fleeing from fools and pursuing the pious. As mentioned above in the introduction, it is commonly observed that the sage uses the personification of Wisdom as a tool to repackage the Jewish faith in more attractive Hellenistic terms: Sophia is the way to salvation.[64]

This point is strengthened when we consider it in light of the personification of Death. The relationship of the fools with Death is set in stark contrast to intimacy with Sophia. Only a fool would pursue Destruction; nevertheless, those who hate Wisdom love Death (Prov. 8.36). Through this juxtaposition, the sage presents two paths of life. Either one will pine for Death or long for Wisdom. His audience can either make Death their king or take Sophia as their bride. Those worthy of Death die, but those worthy of Wisdom find immortality.

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62 See W. Vogels, "The God Who Creates Is the God Who Saves," *Église et Théologie* 22 (1991), and J.S. Kloppenborg, "Isis and Sophia in the Book of Wisdom," *HTR* 75 (1982), 57-84.

63 Cf. the role of Sophia here and the role of Maat in Egyptian religion. Maat destroys the enemies of Re, embraces him night and day; often she stands in the boat of Re, leading his journey across the sky and through the netherworld [Helmer Ringgren, *Word and Wisdom* (Lund: Hakan Ohlssons Boktryckeri, 1947), 46].

64 E.g. James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and Its Consequences* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 41-42 and Sinnott, *Wisdom*, 168.

Contrasting personifications in order to compare two paths in life is common.[65] In the presentation of the two paths which the sage sets out before the people, he presses his audience to choose which way they shall go. For those who "are not ready to take intellectual things neat with nothing else,"[66] his manoeuvre provides a clear explanation of the consequences of the choice, helping the audience to discern clearly the absurdity of even considering the wrong path. [67]

The sage demonstrates these consequences to his audience by referring to Sophia and her role with the personifications of the Spirit, Dike and Dynamis. Sophia will refuse to dwell with the audience if they work evil and the Spirit will be ashamed of them. Sophia and Dike will not let them get away with their sin, and Dynamis will condemn them in it. Better then to choose Wisdom than to meet Justice on the day of examination.

To encourage the suffering

Our investigation therefore supports the general conclusion by scholars that the sage personifies Sophia to present the way to salvation. To understand Sophia more fully, however, one should also understand her in light of Lady Virtue, Creation and Logos.[68] Once we do this, we see that Sophia as the way to immortality is only one of her roles in the book. Along with these other personifications, the sage uses her as a tool to encourage the suffering.

With Virtue who walks with the barren and Creation who fights for the elect, Sophia reassures the audience of God's presence in the midst of affliction. This is not an unusual role for Sophia either; according to Crenshaw, in wisdom literature one way the sages dealt with theodicy was to personify Sophia "as a woman, turned toward human beings like a lover, assuring them of divine benevolence."[69]

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65 For example, in Proverbs 9, a probable source for the sage, Lady Wisdom stands over against Dame Folly. So also, in other works Typhon stands in contrast to Isis (Plutarch, *Moralia* 351f-352a) and Lady Virtue to Lady Vice (Xenophon, *Memorabilia* II.32-33).

66 See the purposes of metaphor in Soskice, *Metaphor*, 24.

67 See the purposes of metaphor by Donald Davidson, "What Metaphors Mean," in *On Metaphor*, ed. Sheldon Sacks (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), 45.

68 These other personifications are important since 'the effect of the trope works best when similar personifications are related to and sustained periodically throughout the work,' [Honig, *Dark Conceit*, 116].

69 James L. Crenshaw, "Theodicy," in *ABD*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 447. Some scholars even argue that the personification of Sophia originated as "an attempt to give an answer to the many questions forced by the crisis of the exile," [Burton L. Mack, *Wisdom and the Hebrew epic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985), 145]. "That wisdom became a mythic figure, an abstraction in a prophetic call for realignments of the orders was not a poetic fantasy. It was the result of a deliberate reflection about a real

In *Wisdom*, the sage assures the audience of divine benevolence by promising that Sophia rescues the godly from troubles (10.9) as was exemplified in her guiding Noah's ark to safety, strengthening Abraham at the binding of his son, saving Jacob from oppressors, and following Joseph into a pit only to exalt him over a kingdom. Moreover, she delivered Israel from the oppression of the Egyptians at the Exodus.

With Arete, she is proof that the barren are really blessed and, with Creation, that the people of God are not forsaken. Also with Creation, Sophia benefits the righteous and assures the godly of divine justice and retribution. Furthermore, as an example of future judgment for those who persecute the godly, as Logos, she destroyed the Egyptians at the tenth plague, and later she drowned their armies with the sea.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we observed that along with the Spirit, Dike and Dynamis, the sage employs the personification of Wisdom to explain the consequences of disobeying his command. These personifications either avoid or rebuke the disobedient. This is in contrast to Death who approaches and partners with them. We also saw Sophia as Lady Virtue who abides with the barren-but-godly. Through her, the sage attempts to divert attention away from the suffering of the saints to the surpassing presence of virtue.

Next, we surveyed the role of Sophia in *Wisdom* 6-11 and discovered the contrasts between the sage's presentation of her and that of Death in Wis. 1.16 as well as the parallels between Sophia and Creation. We argued that the juxtaposition between Sophia and Death supports the general consensus that the sage presents Sophia as the way to salvation. By placing the fools with Death in contrast to the wise with Wisdom, the sage presents two paths of life in which his audience must choose.

We proposed that this is not the only role of Sophia however. Considering the work of Sophia as Lady Virtue in chapter 4 and as the deliverer in chapter 10 (which parallels the role of Creation in chapters 16, 19), we infer that the sage also uses Sophia to encourage those who suffer.

Having considered all of the primary personifications in *Wisdom,* we are now in a position to compare them. Therefore, next we shall summarise our previous findings on personification followed by a synthesis.

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state of affairs. Wisdom had to be imagined this way because that was all that was left of it" (p. 146). He continues: "It was undoubtedly due to a social crisis and its threat to a body of conventional wisdom that such a self-reflective moment occurred within Jewish cultural history" (p. 147). See also Sinnott, *Wisdom*, 53-87.

Section II:
Summary and Synthesis

Summary

Within this section, we have discussed the primary personifications which occur in *Wisdom*. First, in chapter 3, we discovered that the sage personifies Death who enters into God's pristine world through the invitation of fools and the envy of the devil. Thereby, the sage removes God from any blame for evil in the world by placing the blame on evil personifications and the absurd partnership of fools with Death. In chapter 4, we found that personified Creation has provided for the pious in the midst of their suffering in the past, and that in the future, Cosmos will punish these fools who currently persecute them.

Similarly, in chapter 5, we considered Logos, whose past performance at the Passover serves to distance a transcendent God from direct judgement and to encourage the godly by promising future retribution for those who oppress the people of God. In contrast to the inescapable sword of Logos on Egypt, in chapter 6, we learned that Israel escaped the destruction of Wrath who fled from the sword of Aaron. Therefore, in order to avoid the embarrassing narrative in which God loses his temper and in which Israel represents a people of rebellion, the sage personifies Wrath to distance God from the event while ignoring the sin of Israel.

Finally, in chapter 7, we discussed Sophia and the personifications closely associated to her. Dike, Dynamis and the Spirit serve to motivate the audience to pursue righteousness rather than to face punishment. Lady Arete attends the barren, proving that one in such a state is actually better off with virtue than with children. While offering benefits such as immortality to the godly, Sophia not only saves from Death but delivers the saints from suffering.

Synthesis

Now that we have discussed these personifications in part, we should compare these parts to see how they relate to the whole of *Wisdom*. First, we see in *Wisdom* 1 that the personifications of Dike, Dynamis and the holy Spirit are

placed in juxtaposition to those of Death, Hades and Corruption. The author begins by discussing how the personifications of God's justice respond to the evil thoughts, words and actions of fools. On the other hand, the chapter ends with a discussion of how the personifications of Death and Hades respond to such thoughts, words and actions. The Spirit flees from the deceit of the wicked, while Destruction becomes their friend. Sophia will have nothing to do with the ungodly (1.4-5), but Hades makes a pact with them (1.16). Dike and Dynamis condemn the wicked because of their words and deeds (1.3, 8); however, in response to an invitation by the hands and words of the wicked, Death entered into the world (1.16).

Both of these groups of personification serve the chief purposes of persuading the audience to pursue righteousness (1.1) and consequently to avoid death (1.12): the former group does so by warning the audience of divine judgment (1.1-11), the latter by demonstrating the foolishness of a partnership with the evil which stands opposed to God's character and creation (1.12-16).

The sage also places Death in contradistinction to Sophia. In contrast to Death, the way to destruction (1.16; 2.24), the sage presents Lady Wisdom as the way to salvation (6.17-20; 8.13, 17).[1] Whereas the personifications of evil provide the sage a means to demonstrate the partnership between evil personifications and humanity, so the participation with Sophia provides the righteous with a bridge to God. Moreover, in contrast to the fool's illicit love affair with Death (*Wisdom* 1-2), the sage presents Sophia as a bride (8.2) with whom intercourse[2] and cohabitation provide only pleasure and joy (8.16). Just as the fools long for Death (1.16), so the righteous seek Sophia (6.12-16).

Moreover, whereas the fools belong to Death and the Devil (1.16; 2.24), so Lady Wisdom makes the elect friends of God (6.19; 7.27-28). Those who belong to Death are self-deceived (2.21-24), but those who have Sophia and the Spirit fully understand the will of God (9.13-17). Death is against God's creation (1.13-14; 2.23) while Sophia is superior to it (7.29). Through Wisdom (9.2) God created people without Death (2.23). Although Hades has no throne on the earth (1.14), Sophia sits with God on his throne (9.4, 10). While Death has no place in the righteousness of God (1.15), Wisdom is the teacher of righteousness (8.7), the mist of God's power and emanation of his glory (7.25).

Like Sophia, the personifications of Creation and Logos also contrast Death. Creation was not intended for Death (1.13-14) and therefore battles against those who belong to him (5.20-23; 16.16-29; 19.6-10, 18-22) on behalf

1 "Diese Sphäre der Existenz Israels, die als Sphäre des Lichtes, der Sohnschaft Gottes und der Weltherrschaft vorgestellt wird, ist aber nicht konsequent ins Überkosmische verlegt als eine transzendente Erscheinung, sondern erscheint als Existenzbereich innerhalb des Kosmos, der für die Gottlosen die Sphäre der Strafe, der Finsternis und des Todes darstellt," [Burton L. Mack, *Logos und Sophia* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 106].

2 See James M. Reese, *The Book of Wisdom, Song of Songs* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1983), 97.

of those who belong to God. The Lord made the Cosmos though his Logos (9.1) and also kept the godly from death by healing the Israelites from the plague of serpents through his Word (16.12). Aaron contends against Death and Wrath with Logos as his weapon and Cosmos on his garments so that he rescued Israel from the wilderness plague (18.20-25). Therefore, with the personification of Wrath, Israel is a victim of Death, but with the personifications of the World and the Word, she is a victor over him.

However, Logos is not just the tool by which God created the world, a mere cure for death, or a weapon against it: Logos is the agent for divine judgment. Whereas Death and Wrath failed in their attempt to destroy the righteous in the wilderness (18.20-25), Logos succeeded in punishing the ungodly at the Passover (18.14-16). This work by Logos upon the Egyptians in the past foreshadows that of Creation upon the wicked in the future (5.20-23), as well as that of Dike and Dynamis (1.3-9) who will utterly destroy the wicked on the day of God's visitation.[3]

Whereas Creation and Logos stand over against Death and Wrath, the personifications of the World and the Word stand in close relationship to Sophia. For example, both Logos and Sophia come from God's throne and are instruments in the creation of the World (7.21; 9.1-4, 10). Just as Logos reached from heaven to earth to fill all things with death, so Wisdom reaches from end to end to order all things well (8.1). Whereas Logos and Creation achieve retribution for the godly who suffer, Sophia and Creation assist the godly in the midst of afflictions (8.9; 9.18-11.4; 16.16-29; 19.6-10, 18-22). This is also the case with Lady Virtue who is there for the barren as she surpasses their suffering (4.1-2). In fact, as we mentioned above, there is reason to believe that the sage identifies Sophia with Logos and with Lady Virtue so that Sophia is associated both with the punishment of the wicked persecutors and with the comfort of suffering saints.

Conclusion

Having now looked at all of these personifications together, we conclude that the sage primarily uses personification in two discussions: soteriology and theodicy. In the former, these personifications are associated with humanity in order to set up the stark dichotomy between the wicked and the godly. The personifications of Hades, Death and Destruction as well as Sophia, Dike and Dynamis are used to motivate the audience to pursue righteousness rather than

3 Bogdan Ponizy, "Logos in the Book of Wisdom 18:14-16," in "*Dort ziehen Schiffe dahin*" ed. Matthias Augustin and Klaus-Dietrich Schunck (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1996), 172-173. See also Carl Ludwig Wilibald Grimm, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1860), 286-287.

to seek Destruction. As the fools long for Death who leads to damnation, so the sage urges his audience to long for Sophia who leads to immortality. Whereas his discussion of Sophia might persuade the audience to embrace righteousness, the personifications of Dike, Dynamis and Logos would serve as a warning for the audience to remain faithful to the God of Israel.

The personifications also aid the sage in discussions of theodicy. *Wisdom* deflects attention away from suffering to the splendour of Arete in order to comfort the barren: better to have Virtue with her victorious march than even to give birth to children (4.1-2). Like Arete, Sophia provides comfort in the face of worries and pain (8.9). Moreover, through Wisdom and Creation, the sage recalls God's past deliverance of the righteous from suffering. Lady Wisdom and Creation are mediators between God and his persecuted elect—Sophia as their saviour and Creation as their champion.

Furthermore, in an attempt to defend God's justice, the sage personifies Wrath in order to explain why righteous Israel experienced Death in the wilderness. Similarly, the sage personifies Death and Wrath to distance God from the origin and work of evil. He also personifies Dike, Dynamis, Creation and Logos to stress God's response to this work of evil. In order to assure the godly of a future retribution for the persecutors and a remedy from affliction, the sage uses these personifications in contexts dealing with judgement—past (e.g. Logos), present (e.g. Sophia), and future (e.g. Creation).

Whereas Death is the lover of fools, Dike is their judge. Creation gives her all to defend the righteous, hurling her wrath upon the impious who oppressed them. Likewise, Logos leaps from heaven to exert destruction upon those who enslaved God's people. This reminder of past justice and promise of future judgment would serve as a defence of God's righteousness, a consolation to his persecuted people, and an incentive to those faithful to him.

Section III: Introduction

Romans is "the sum and crown of the Pauline gospel"[1] and "arguably the single most important work of Christian theology ever written."[2] It was probably composed around 55-57 CE from Corinth,[3] and a number of possible purposes have been proposed: 1) to describe Paul's gospel (Theological/ Apologetic),[4] 2) to prepare the way for his mission to Spain (Evangelical/ Missionary),[5] and 3) to address issues and problems in the Roman churches (Pastoral)[6] who, among other things were struggling with discrepancies between Jewish tradition and Gentile freedom.[7] Further, Paul's encouragement in Rom. 5.3-5 for the believers to boast in (the)[8] afflictions as well as his discussion of Christian suffering in Rom. 8.17-39 suggest these Christians were facing some hardships for their faith.[9]

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1 Peter Stuhlmacher, "The Purpose of Romans," in *The Romans Debate*, ed. Karl P. Donfried (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 242.

2 James D. G. Dunn, "Romans, Letter to the," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1993), 838. In fact, "If one were to endeavor to excise its influence from the history of Christian thought, it would be difficult to set any limit to how radical the surgery would have to be, or to guarantee what would be left over once it had been completed," [Jeffrey P. Greenman and Timothy Larson, eds., *Reading Romans Through the Centuries* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2005), 13].

3 Scholars generally agree with this date and place of origin. E.g. Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 18; Leander E. Keck, *Romans* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 30; Dunn, "Romans, Letter to the," 838.

4 "The dialogue we are witnessing in Romans is a real one in which Paul is wrestling for the hearts and minds of the Christians in Rome," [Stuhlmacher, "The Purpose of Romans," 240].

5 Jewett, *Romans*, 80-91; A.J. Wedderburn, "The Purpose and Occasion of Romans Again," in *The Romans Debate*, ed. Karl P. Donfried (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 195-202. Bruce also argues that Paul also has his upcoming Jerusalem journey in mind, [F.F. Bruce, "The Romans Debate--Continued," in *The Romans Debate*, ed. Karl P. Donfried (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 188-193].

6 L. Ann Jervis, *The Purpose of Romans: A Comparative Letter Structure Investigation* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 14-27. Cf. also Dunn, "Romans, Letter to the," 839-840. According to Esler, Paul responds to a rhetorical situation of which there is 1) some urgent social disorder, 2) a need for behavior modification and 3) and constraints which impend this modification. [Philip Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans: the social setting of Paul's letter* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 16].

7 With Jews and Gentiles on both sides of the fence, see Bruce, "Debate," 183-193.

8 According to Jewett, the definite article preceding the word "afflictions" in 5.3-5 points to a specific group of situations known to Paul and his audience [Jewett, *Romans*, 353].

9 For Paul's audience, the encouragement to boast in afflictions in Romans is a very timely question in light of the persecution of the Christians by their enemies and their "unstable place within Greco-Roman society in general" [Simon J. Gathercole, *Where is Boasting?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 257].

Not only does Romans have several proposed purposes, but scholars have also detected several elements from different genre categories, such as epideictic,[10] protreptic,[11] and the ambassadorial letter.[12] Due to Paul's tendency to combine many different elements, his writings have been considered "*fremdartig*" and "*unhellenisch,*"[13] making it difficult to classify his work altogether.[14] Due to this difficulty, some have even refused to attempt a classification at all, finding it sufficient enough to say that Paul utilised various conventions and elements in the writing of the letter.[15]

Using our definition of personification as the attribution of human characteristics to any inanimate object, abstract concept or impersonal being, especially those which take action verbs most often associated with people, we can see that Paul rarely uses personification outside of Romans.[16] Moreover, of

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10 Wilhelm Wuellner, "Paul's Rhetoric of Argumentation in Romans," in *The Romans Debate*, ed. Karl P. Donfried (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 1991), 140: Paul uses the epideictic category in order to "establish a sense of communion centered around particular values recognized by the audience … and to this end he uses a whole range of means available to the rhetorician for purposes of amplification and enhancement." (p. 140). According to Keck, Romans fits best into the epideictic category, which serves to increase knowledge, understanding or belief through the method of praising or blaming persons, values or things [Keck, *Romans*, 22].

11 "Romans is protreptic in the sense that Paul is not only concerned to convince people of the truth of Christianity, but more particularly in the sense that he argues for his version of Christianity over other competing 'schools' of Christian thought," [David Aune, "Romans as Logos Protreptikos," in *The Romans Debate*, ed. Karl P. Donfried (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 279]. See also David Aune, "Romans as a Logos Protrepticos in the Context of Ancient Religious and Philosophical Propaganda," in *Paulus als Missionar und Theologe und das antike Judentum* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1991), 278-296.

12 Jewett concludes that Romans is a "unique fusion of the 'ambassadorial letter' with several of the other subtypes in the genre: the parenetic letter, the hortatory letter, and the philosophical diatribe" [Jewett, *Romans*, 44; See also Robert Jewett, "Romans as an Ambassadorial Letter," *Interpretation* 36 (1982), 9]. Similarly, James Hester takes it as an inconsistent ambassadorial letter written in order "to create a *persona* for the Romans to use in hearing and evaluating his version of the gospel" as well as "to convince them that he and they in fact shared common values" [James D. Hester, "The Rhetoric of *Persona* in Romans: Re-reading Romans 1:1-12," in *Celebrating Romans*, ed. Sheila E. McGinn (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 85].

13 Eduard Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa: Vom vi. Jahrhundert v. Chr. bis in die Zeit der Renaissance*, 2 vols. (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1898), 499.

14 According to Anderson, Paul's obscurity transgresses a key virtue in rhetorical theory—σαφήνεια [R. Dean Anderson Jr., *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul* (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 281].

15 Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 15; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 24; Dunn, "Romans, Letter to the," 841. Dunn says that since different categories can be applied to Romans, the genre is unclear as well as the point of trying to apply one [Dunn, "Romans, Letter to the," 841]; see also James D. G. Dunn, "The Formal and Theological Coherence of Romans," in *The Romans Debate*, ed. Karl P. Donfried (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 246.

16 E.g. Graphe in Gal. 3.8, 22.

Paul's letters, the majority of his personifications, and the most developed of these, occur in Romans 5-8: Sin, Death,[17] Law (Nomos), Grace, Righteousness (Dikaiosyne), Creation and (possibly)[18] Spirit. Elsewhere in Romans, both Nomos and Dikaiosyne speak (3.19; 10.5-6).

At a glance, Sin, Death and the Law stand over against Grace and Righteousness. Dikaiosyne trumps the Law of Moses; the hope of Creation and the aid of the Spirit surpass present suffering. To reiterate, the capitalisation of these personifications is merely to highlight the words as personifications and not to imply that they are supernatural powers (whether they are or not). This is especially relevant for the personification of Sin since many scholars demonstrate their interpretation on the nature of (s)in as either the power of *S*in or the rhetorical device of *s*in.

In this section, we shall begin with the personifications of Sin and Death (chapter 8). We shall argue that these personifications serve 1) to explain to the Christians the reality of living under sin in order to motivate them to control their passions and 2) to expose the cause of death in the world, namely the partnership between humanity and Sin. This unholy union serves 3) to distance God from the cause of death, so that 4) the personifications of Sin and Death can serve as a foil for the work and Grace of God and the gospel of Christ.

In chapter 9, we shall discuss the personification of the Law and seek to demonstrate that Paul personifies Nomos to distance (but *not disconnect*) the Law from God's direct work of salvation by depicting Nomos as an prosecutor who condemns humanity, as its own agent who enters the world to increase sin, and as a king who reigns over the unredeemed. In chapter 10, we shall consider how Grace and Righteousness stand in juxtaposition to Sin and Death as well as how Dikaiosyne even speaks and reinterprets a passage from the Law of Moses to show the superiority of Paul's gospel over this Law. Having seen that Paul gives voice to both Nomos and Dikaiosyne, we shall consider why Paul uses personifications to quote scriptures. It will be proposed that, in the tradition of *prosopopoiia*, Paul defers to the voice of the Law and of Righteousness to argue an unpopular case, namely that the Law did not come to save but condemn and that salvation therefore is found elsewhere.

Finally, in chapter 11, we shall discuss the personification of Creation and the power of the Spirit, which the apostle employs to deflect attention away from the current problem of Christian affliction to the company of Creation and the aid of the Spirit as well as to defer the answer to the future solution for suffering.[19] We will then summarise the section, compare the personifications, and present that Paul primarily uses personification in passages dealing with the origin and reign of Sin, the apparent ineffectiveness of the Law, and the

17 Of all of these, only Death is personified again in Paul's other letters (1 Cor. 15.26, 54).

18 Infra.

suffering of the righteous. We shall propose that Paul employs personification chiefly to distance God and the Law from evil, to distance the Law from God's ultimate response to evil, and to defer the solution for the problem of suffering to the future.

Chapter 8

The Personifications of Sin and Death

Introduction

When Sin was personified in the ancient world, it was depicted primarily as an external force.[1] However, Paul depicts Sin as internal to humanity as well as external.[2] Furthermore, to our knowledge, the apostle's personification of Sin is more developed than any other parallel before the writing of Romans, and it is the most developed personification in all of Paul's writings. Indeed, no other personification takes up as much space in Paul's letters as Sin, and the majority of Paul's references to sin in general occur in Rom. 5.12-8.11, (42 times).[3] Moreover, surrounding this personification are other important personifications such as Law, Grace and Sin's partner in crime, Death.

Paul refers to death and its relationship to humanity in different ways;[4] however, most relevant to this study are Paul's references to death in its relationship to universal sin and the personification of this death as God's "most powerful enemy"[5] whose sting is gone and whose reign is soon to disappear as well (1 Cor. 15.54).

Like Sin, the personification of Death was also a familiar one.[6] Death is often personified with a partner, such as Phonos,[7] Abaddon, [8] the Devil,[9] and

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1 E.g. Gen. 4.7; Jas. 1.15; Jer. 14.7. Cf. Jer. 5.25; Zech. 5.5-8; *Pss. Sol* 3.6.

2 See Gustav Stählin who finds a developing view in Second Temple Judaism that began to see sin as a cosmic power rather than a rhetorical device [Gustav Stählin, "ΑΜΑΡΤΑΝΩ," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983), 296].

3 Cf. Helmut Umbach, *In Christus getauft – von der Sünde befreit* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999; similarly, Kuss states that out of 59 times in Paul's letters, 48 of these occur in Romans [Otto Kuss, *Der Römerbrief* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1963), 227].

4 For summaries on Paul's view of Death see Sorin Sabou, *Between horror and hope: Paul's metaphorical language of death in Romans 6.1-11* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2005), B.R. Gaventa, "The Rhetoric of Death in the Wisdom of Solomon and the Letters of Paul," in *The Listening Heart*, ed. Kenneth G. Hoglund (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 135-139; J.J. Scott, "Life and Death," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1993), 553-555; and C. Clifton Black, "Pauline Perspectives on Death in Romans 5-8," *JBL* 103, no. 3 (1984), 413-433.

5 Gaventa, "Rhetoric," 135-139. Cf. 2 *Bar*. 21.23.

6 Cf. Seneca, *Ep.* LXXX.6. For more examples see chapter 4.

most often, Hades.[10] Paul, however, pairs Death with Sin.[11] Like Sin, Death plays a key role in Romans in that θάνατος appears at the climactic point in 1.32, 5.21, 6.23, 7.24 and 8.38.[12] Moreover, of the ninety-five occurrences of θάνατος and its cognates in the undisputed letters of Paul, forty-nine occur in Romans (and all but seven of these appear in Romans 5-8).[13]

Paul presents Sin and Death as supreme rulers of the old age, "which in turn determine the function of the Law and flesh in the world."[14] Unusual in development is the thought that they are former figures now dethroned. Also peculiar is the idea that although Sin and Death have been defeated, their residual effects remain, since Death (and presumably Sin) will not be completely destroyed until the *Parousia*.[15]

It has been said that Death rather than Sin is Paul's primary personification in Romans. According to Brendan Byrne, "Paul's principle concern…is not with the onset of sin but with what comes in sin's train, namely death."[16] So also, Michael Theobald concludes:—"Von der <<Sünde>> spricht Paulus hier nur, um angemessen vom <<Tod>> sprechen zu können."[17] We should remember, however, that the role of Sin plays as vital a part as Death in Rom. 5.12-21, and in fact, it is Sin, not Death, that becomes the dominant personification in the ensuing chapters.

For this reason, our stress will be on the personification of Sin. First, we shall consider the entrance of Sin and reign of Death in 5.12-21 (1), followed by a discussion of Sin the slave-master in 6.12-23 (2), and Sin as the deceiver

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7 Ex. 5.3; Cf. *Pss. Sol* 15.7.

8 Job 28.22 (MT : אֲבַדּוֹן/LXX : ἀπώλεια).

9 Wis. 2.24.

10 Ps. 48.15, 54.16; Sir. 14.12, 28.21; Rev. 6.8, 20.13-14. Cf. 1 *Enoch* 92.5 (Sin and Darkness).

11 Cf. Jas. 1.15, where Lust becomes pregnant and gives birth to Sin, who in turn, grows up and gives birth to Death.

12 James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 302.

13 Black, "Death," 413.

14 J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1980), 214.

15 For an in depth discussion on the relationship between the powers of Sin and Death, see Ibid., 213-234. Beker distinguishes the two as independent reigning powers since Sin has been destroyed by the cross, but the last enemy Death still remains as "a 'dark' residue of suffering and death in God's created order that will be resolved only by the final resurrection of the dead in the glory of God," (p. 233). In order to reconcile this tension, Beker rightly argues that Paul's definition of death should be judged by context: when Paul refers to realised eschatology, Death is still the last enemy; however, when he speaks concerning justification, he interprets the Christian life as a victory over death (pp. 229-234). In Romans 5-7, however, Death remains a last enemy, despite the fact that the Christians have victory over him.

16 Brendan Byrne, *Romans* (Collegeville, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press, 1996), 176, cf. 420. See also Black, "Death," 420.

17 Michael Theobald, *Römerbrief Kapitel 1-11* (Stuttgart: Verlag Katholisches Bibelwerk GmbH, 2002), 161.

and murder of Ego in 7.7-25 (3). Finally, we shall discuss the purposes of the personifications (4). As with the other personifications, we use the upper case with Sin only to denote that it is personified, not to designate it as a demonic power, whether it is or not.[18]

Within these sections we shall argue that there is progression of the personification (which commentators have tended to over-look). Sin progresses from an external influence to an internal one. We shall see that with this progression, there is also a development in how humanity relates to Sin. In Rom. 5.12-21, people are enslaved to the external rulers of Sin and Death. The people in Romans 6, however, have been set free from these rulers, yet still they can accept the regime of Sin who is now said to be able to reign *within* them. Not only can the believers accept the rule of Sin, they can even initiate the relationship by offering their body parts to Sin.[19]

In contrast, the person in 7.9-25 insists that he is a victim of Sin. Rather than accepting responsibility, the person blames the coming of Sin into his life on the coming of the Law. Sin is no longer associated so much with a trespass as in Rom. 5.12-21, nor is it something that can be resisted as in Romans 6: now Sin is an irresistible force dwelling inconspicuously within the person's flesh until the Law finally reveals the cause of the person's impotence before Sin.

1. The Entrance of Sin & the Reign of Death (Rom. 5.12-21)

[12] Διὰ τοῦτο ὥσπερ δι' ἑνὸς ἀνθρώπου ἡ ἁμαρτία εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰσῆλθεν καὶ διὰ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὁ θάνατος, καὶ οὕτως εἰς πάντας ἀνθρώπους ὁ θάνατος διῆλθεν, ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον· [13] ἄχρι γὰρ νόμου ἁμαρτία ἦν ἐν κόσμῳ, ἁμαρτία δὲ οὐκ ἐλλογεῖται μὴ ὄντος νόμου, [14] ἀλλὰ ἐβασίλευσεν ὁ θάνατος ἀπὸ Ἀδὰμ μέχρι Μωϋσέως…

[21] ἵνα ὥσπερ ἐβασίλευσεν ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ, οὕτως καὶ ἡ χάρις βασιλεύσῃ διὰ δικαιοσύνης εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.

Therefore, just as through one man Sin entered into the cosmos so also through Sin, Death came in as well; thus, Death spread to all humanity, since all had sinned. For until the Law, Sin was in the world, but Sin was not reckoned, since the Law had not yet come. But Death ruled from Adam until Moses…

So that just as Sin ruled with Death, so also Grace reigned through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Although in 1.18-32 Paul provides one version of a *Verdammnisgeschichte*, only his version in 5.12-21 includes the personifications of Sin, Death and the

18 Again, whether Paul saw these personifications as real beings or representing real beings is beyond the scope of this work; however, either way Paul still *presents* these personifications as powers, see Rudolf Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, trans. Kendrick Grobel, vol. II (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), 244-245, 251.

19 These body parts need not be "limited to the physical body, for it surely includes in a figurative sense all human talents and abilities," [James R. Edwards, *Romans*, NIBC (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 165].

Law. Whereas 1.18-32 transitions from the righteousness of God to the wrath of God, 5.12-21 places the personifications of Sin and Death resulting from the disobedience of the first Adam in juxtaposition over against the righteousness and life resulting from the second Adam, Jesus Christ. In Romans 1, sin is a false assumption and evil deed. Here, Sin and Death are personified as alien intruders[20] presented in a quasi-drama[21] where believers are rescued from these rulers.[22] This drama plays out as Sin entered into the world through Adam with Death in its wake, making its way into the lives of all humanity because all humanity sinned.

Through the personification, Paul presents Death as a co-ruler with Sin, who entered with Sin to reign over humanity. Death reigned unchecked and Sin existed unrecognised until personified Law (Nomos) came (v. 20). Nomos did not remedy the situation at all but increased trespass instead. As a result, Sin continued to abound[23] and reign "with"[24] Death over all humanity until the work of Christ.

According to Cranfield, Death "is not sin's soldier, servant or instrument." Rather, "death is the sign of God's authority, appointed by God…willed not by sin but by God."[25] However, rather than a soldier, servant or instrument willed by Sin or God, here Paul presents Death as a partner working with Sin (v. 12) in contrast to the work of God. Rather than as God's appointee, Death reigns in contrast to the reign of the people of God and to the personification of Grace (vv. 17, 21). Following these personifications to Romans 6, we see that Death and Sin stand over against Christ and the Christian and in contradistinction to personified Grace and Righteousness. Furthermore, Paul's only other personification of Death should also be taken into account; in 1 Cor. 15.26, 54-55, Death is God's enemy not his servant. Therefore, personified Death in the writings of Paul should be seen as God's nemesis rather than as his agent.

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20 Martinus C. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 147.

21 Byrne, *Romans*, 175.

22 For a discussion of this story, see Edward Adams, "Paul's Story of God and Creation," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (London: John Knox Press, 2002), 19-39.

23 Cf. LXX Jer. 37.14 (MT 30.14) and Sir. 23.3.

24 In light of the personifications of Sin and Death and its result in 5.12, ἐν τῷ Θανάτῳ most likely means the accompaniment of Death with death as its result [cf. C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 10th ed., ICC, vol. I (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001), 294]. It could also be translated as "through" or "in the sphere of Death." Käsemann, Schreiner and Moo argue for the latter [Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, English Translation ed. (London: SCM Press, 1980), 158; Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 296; Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 349]. While we agree that Paul considers Death a sphere, it seems that Sin represents this sphere as well. In other words, Sin does not reign in the sphere of Death: Sin and Death represent the sphere from which the believer has been delivered.

25 Cranfield, *Romans*, 294.

Cranfield also concludes that if Paul personifies Sin in v. 12 ("Sin entered"), he does not sustain the personification because of v. 13b ("all sinned").[26] However, Paul's second mention of sin does not dissolve the personification at all—especially in light of 1) the personification of Death in the following verses, 2) the return to personified Sin in v. 21, and 3) its expansion in the following chapters. Instead, whereas Sin in v. 12 refers to the personification of evil, the verb emphasises the aspect of humanity's acceptance of evil.[27]

Therefore, Sin and Death are not the only culprits in this passage. Despite statements which identify Sin here as a "tyrannischen Gewalt"[28] and in contrast to frameworks which imply that Paul understands humanity as victims to the powers of Sin and Death, within this passage, people are presented just as much as the blame for the entrance of Sin and Death. [29] In fact, there is little in this passage which depicts the personification as a tyrannical power who forces her way into the world and into the life of sinners.

Stephen Westerholm's conclusion, then, is relevant here:

> Though Paul may have undoubtedly believed in demonic forces and thought unredeemed humanity is in some sense subject to their power, he does not typically attribute human sinfulness to, or portray redemption as deliverance from, the power of demons.[30]

As we mentioned above, whether Paul considers Sin and Death as actual demonic powers or not is beyond the scope of this work. However, the presentation of Sin and Death as external figures suggests a degree of outside pressure on humanity, even if human sinfulness is not attributed to these external influences alone. Whereas sins and Sin can be distinct phenomena, here an exertnal force and personal transgression are "intricately related and reinforce each other."[31] That is to say, "Beide Aspekte denkt Paulus zusammen,"[32] and it is the personification that enables him to do so.

In other words, through personification, Paul brings out the relationship between an abstract force of external evil and the concrete deeds of wicked humanity. Therefore, cosmological and anthropological aspects are com-

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26 Ibid., 274. Cf. William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *The Epistle to the Romans*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1895), 145-146.

27 Cranfield, *Romans*, 274. See also Edwards, *Romans*, 164.

28 "Er spricht von der Sünde (und auch vom Tode) wie von einer handelnden Macht, von einer tyrannischen Gewalt..." [Kuss, *Der Römerbrief*, 244].

29 See de Boer, *Death*, 85-91.

30 Stephen Westerholm, "Paul's Anthropological 'Pessimism' in its Jewish Context," in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and his Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 79.

31 Bruce W. Longenecker, *The Triumph of Abraham's God* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998),

39. See also p. 41.

32 Theobald, *Römerbrief Kapitel 1-11*, 162. See also E. Lohse, *Der Brief an die Römer* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), 175-176.

bined—Sin entered because humanity sinned; Sin proposes and the sinner accepts. Here then, redemption is not deliverance from the dictatorship of evil, but rather from the democracy of it. (It is not until Rom. 7.9-25 that a person is portrayed as victimised by Sin.)

That humans accept the reign of Sin and offer themselves to it is illustrated in Romans 6, which moves from the past introduction of Sin and Death into the world to the current relationship of Sin with the church. As we shall see, rather than external rulers who reign over the unredeemed, Sin and Death can now rule within the believer.

2. Sin and her Relationship with Believers (Romans 6)

Rom 6. 9, 12-23

[9] εἰδότες ὅτι Χριστὸς ἐγερθεὶς ἐκ νεκρῶν οὐκέτι ἀποθνήσκει, Θάνατος αὐτοῦ οὐκέτι κυριεύει… [12] Μὴ οὖν βασιλευέτω ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ θνητῷ ὑμῶν σώματι εἰς τὸ ὑπακούειν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις αὐτοῦ, [13] μηδὲ παριστάνετε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν ὅπλα ἀδικίας τῇ ἁμαρτίᾳ, ἀλλὰ παραστήσατε ἑαυτοὺς τῷ θεῷ ὡσεὶ ἐκ νεκρῶν ζῶντας καὶ τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν ὅπλα δικαιοσύνης τῷ θεῷ. [14] Ἁμαρτία γὰρ ὑμῶν οὐ κυριεύσει· οὐ γάρ ἐστε ὑπὸ Νόμον ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ Χάριν. [15] Τί οὖν; ἁμαρτήσωμεν, ὅτι οὐκ ἐσμὲν ὑπὸ Νόμον ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ Χάριν; μὴ γένοιτο. [16] οὐκ οἴδατε ὅτι ᾧ παριστάνετε ἑαυτοὺς δούλους εἰς ὑπακοήν, δοῦλοί ἐστε ᾧ ὑπακούετε, ἤτοι ἁμαρτίας εἰς θάνατον ἢ ὑπακοῆς εἰς δικαιοσύνην; [17] χάρις δὲ τῷ θεῷ ὅτι ἦτε δοῦλοι τῆς ἁμαρτίας ὑπηκούσατε δὲ ἐκ καρδίας εἰς ὃν παρεδόθητε τύπον διδαχῆς, [18] ἐλευθερωθέντες δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἐδουλώθητε τῇ Δικαιοσύνῃ. [19] Ἀνθρώπινον λέγω διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν ὥσπερ γὰρ παρεστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ Ἀκαθαρσίᾳ καὶ τῇ Ἀνομίᾳ εἰς τὴν ἀνομίαν, οὕτως νῦν παραστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ Δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς ἁγιασμόν.

Knowing that since Christ was raised from the dead and can no longer die, Death no longer rules over him. Therefore, do not let Sin rule in your mortal bodies so that you obey her desires. Neither present your members as weapons of unrighteousness to Sin, but instead present yourselves to God and your members as weapons[33] of righteousness to him, as those who conquered death. For Sin does not rule over you, for you are not under Law but Grace. What then? Should we continue to sin since we are under Grace rather than Law? Of course not! Do you not know that you are slaves to whomever you present yourselves for obedience? That is to say, you are slaves to the one you obey—whether it is Sin who leads to Death or Obedience who leads to Righteousness. But thank God, since you were slaves to Sin but you obeyed from your heart that pattern of teaching to which you were delivered. Having been liberated from Sin, you became a slave to Righteousness. (I speak like a man because of the weakness of your flesh.) Just as you presented your members as slaves to Impurity and Lawlessness which leads to lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to Righteousness which leads to holiness.

33 See Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 410.

[20] ὅτε γὰρ δοῦλοι ἦτε τῆς ἁμαρτίας, ἐλεύθεροι ἦτε τῇ Δικαιοσύνῃ. [21] τίνα οὖν καρπὸν εἴχετε τότε; ἐφ' οἷς νῦν ἐπαισχύνεσθε, τὸ γὰρ τέλος ἐκείνων Θάνατος. [22] νυνὶ δὲ ἐλευθερωθέντες ἀπὸ τῆς Αμαρτίας δουλωθέντες δὲ τῷ θεῷ ἔχετε τὸν καρπὸν ὑμῶν εἰς ἁγιασμόν, τὸ δὲ τέλος ζωὴν αἰώνιον. [23] τὰ γὰρ ὀψώνια τῆς ἁμαρτίας θάνατος, τὸ δὲ χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ ζωὴ αἰώνιος ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ τῷ κυρίῳ ἡμῶν.

For when you were slaves to Sin, you were free in respect to Righteousness. What fruit did you bear then from those things in which you are now ashamed? The end of these things is Death. But now having been set free from Sin and becoming a slave to God, you have fruit which leads to holiness; whose end is eternal life. For the wages of Sin is Death,[34] but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

In Rom. 6.1-11, Paul explains why the believer should refuse to cooperate with Sin: when the saints participated in the death of Christ through baptism, they, like Christ, died to Sin once and for all. Just as Death no longer rules over Christ, so also Sin no longer rules over Christians. Here for the first time in Romans, Sin is referred to as something internal as well as external; the apostle commands the believers to reject the reign of Sin *in* their bodies, to refuse to stand alongside of[35] Sin and no longer to place themselves at the disposal of this slave master. Such actions cause them to become "a willing instrument in its system of domination."[36]

Whereas in Romans 5 Paul places Sin in juxtaposition to Grace, here he places it in juxtaposition to God—one can either live for Sin or for God (v. 10). Paul also returns to the contrast of Law and Grace, figures which were previously personified in 5.12-21 and perhaps still carry that force here. Just as Law is associated with Sin, so Grace is associated with God. Therefore, according to Paul, one is either under Law,[37] and thus under Sin, or one is under Grace, and thus under God (v. 14). Paul continues to change terminology as he expands the contrast between Sin and God. (We will discuss Sin's contrast with personified Righteousness in chapter 10.)

Within this passage, the stress moves from the action of Sin with humanity (5.12-21) to the reaction of the believer to Sin (6.12-23). In other words, there is a shift of agency in Romans 6. In Rom. 5.12-21, Paul emphasises the agency of Sin, Death and the Law over against that of God, Grace and the Christ; here however, Paul focuses more on human agency—the believer's obligation to reject Sin and stop sinning. In brief, since believers have participated in

34 Whereas "wages" usually was that which provided sustenance for life, the wage of Sin provides just the opposite, Death [Ibid., 426].

35 Lit: παριστάνετε, see H.G Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 1340.

36 Jewett, *Romans*, 409.

37 According to Jewett, the phrase "under law" likely originated from a rabbinic interpretation of Exod. 19.17 and Deut. 4.11 as that which "was suspended in a threatening manner over their heads," [Ibid., 415].

Christ's death, they should no longer cooperate with the personification of Sin (i.e. accept Sin's rule or offer their bodies to it).

Therefore, whereas 5.12-21 focuses more on the past—what Christ has done in spite of the cooperation between Sin and sins—6.12-23 focuses more on the present cooperation between the believer and Sin in spite of their participation in Christ's death to Death. According to Paul then, Sin will reign only if the believers do not reckon themselves to be dead to it. In other words, if Sin dominates the believer, it is only because the Christian has accepted, or even embraced, that reign.

3. Sin as the Deceiver and Murderer of Ego (Romans 7)

So far in Romans, Paul has claimed that the Law increases trespass (5.20) and rules with Sin (6.14). From Paul's reasoning, one might question the relationship of the Law with Sin. Things become complicated as Paul tries to cast life under the Law as leading to both Sin and Death while maintaining that the Law is altogether good. Therefore, Paul creates a great tension, a burning question: "ὁ νόμος ἁμαρτία?" This is a relevant question indeed, in light of what Paul has said about the Law already in this letter, not to mention in previous letters.[38] It is this question that Paul now addresses as he seeks to exonerate the Law by stressing the agency of personified Sin.

Rom. 7.7-13

[7]Τί οὖν ἐροῦμεν; ὁ Νόμος ἁμαρτία; μὴ γένοιτο· ἀλλὰ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν οὐκ ἔγνων εἰ μὴ διὰ Νόμου· τήν τε γὰρ ἐπιθυμίαν οὐκ ᾔδειν εἰ μὴ ὁ Νόμος ἔλεγεν· οὐκ ἐπιθυμήσεις.
[8]ἀφορμὴν δὲ λαβοῦσα ἡ ἁμαρτία διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς κατειργάσατο ἐν ἐμοὶ πᾶσαν ἐπιθυμίαν· χωρὶς γὰρ Νόμου ἁμαρτία νεκρά .
[9]ἐγὼ δὲ ἔζων χωρὶς νόμου ποτέ, ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἡ ἁμαρτία ἀνέζησεν,[10]ἐγὼ δὲ ἀπέθανον καὶ εὑρέθη μοι ἡ ἐντολὴ ἡ εἰς ζωήν, αὕτη εἰς θάνατον·

What shall we say? Is the Law Sin? Of course not! In fact, I would not even know Sin if it were not for the Law. For example, I was unaware of the act of coveting until the Law said, "Do not covet." But, seizing the opportunity through the command, Sin worked in me every kind of desire —for outside of the Law, Sin is dead Yet, I was alive outside of the Law, but at the coming of the command, Sin sprang to life, and I died.

38 E.g. Gal. 4.9, 1 Cor. 15.56 and 2 Cor. 3.7-18.

[11] ἡ γὰρ ἁμαρτία ἀφορμὴν λαβοῦσα διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς ἐξηπάτησέν με καὶ δι' αὐτῆς ἀπέκτεινεν.
[12] ὥστε ὁ μὲν Νόμος ἅγιος καὶ ἡ ἐντολὴ ἁγία καὶ δικαία καὶ ἀγαθή.
[13] Τὸ οὖν ἀγαθὸν ἐμοὶ ἐγένετο θάνατος; μὴ γένοιτο· ἀλλὰ ἡ ἁμαρτία, ἵνα φανῇ ἁμαρτία, διὰ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ μοι κατεργαζομένη θάνατον, ἵνα γένηται καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἁμαρτωλὸς ἡ ἁμαρτία διὰ τῆς ἐντολῆς.

This command, which was intended for life,[39] instead resulted in death. For seizing the opportunity[40] through the command, Sin deceived me and through it she killed me. So that the Law is indeed holy and the commandment as well, holy, righteous, and good. Therefore, did this good Law cause Death? Of course not! But in order that Sin may be seen as Sin, through the good Law, Sin worked Death in me, so that through the commandment Sin might be exposed as exceedingly sinful.

It is not critical, at this point, to specify the precise identity of the "I" in Romans 7 (e.g. Adam,[41] Israel,[42] an autobiographical Paul with allusions to Adam and Israel,[43] or a rhetorical person in their engagement with the Law.)[44] Therefore, rather than its much debated identity, this section will focus primarily on the personification of Sin in the argument. Thus, for simplicity, we will refer to the "I," whoever he or she[45] may be, as Ego. At a glance, in vv. 7-11, Paul refers to a time in the past before Sin was alive, before the commandment had come, and before Sin had the opportunity to bring Death. One finds in this chapter a simple pattern—the Law comes bringing knowledge of Sin, Sin comes bringing Death.

According to Paul, the Law is not Sin. On the contrary, the Law defined Sin, while at the same time, Sin exploited the Law in order to manipulate Ego. In v. 7, Paul restates the principle in 3.20: Nomos gives one knowledge of Sin.[46] The apostle illustrates this point with a reference to the tenth

39 The command had the intention of bringing life, but the way to death was paved with this good intention. Moo discusses the three possibilities of what the introduction of the commandment entails. It could be 1) that the commandment defined sin, 2) that it exposed the nature and power of sin, or 3) that through the commandment Ego literally experienced sin [Moo, *Romans*, 433-434]. The following context seems to point to all three of these possibilities since the definition of sin leads to the revelation of Sin's power which Ego (regretfully) experiences and against which he struggles.

40 This word is often used in military contexts "to denote the origin of war," [C.K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 142].

41 Cf. early church fathers, Käsemann, Lichtenberger, Adams, Laato, Stuhlmacher, and T.L. Carter.

42 Cf. Moo, Byrne, Dunn and Kim.

43 Cf. Chester, Seifrid, Theissen, Deissmann, Gundry, Watson, Barrett, Schreiner, Lambrecht.

44 Cf. Jewett, Cranfield, Hübner, Engberg-Pedersen, Bornkamm, Sanders, Bultmann.

45 See A. Busch, "The Figure of Eve in Romans 7.5-25," *Biblical Interpretation* 12, no. 1 (2004), 1-36.

46 Cf. Seneca, *Moral Epistles*, §28: "Knowledge of sin is the beginning of salvation."

commandment.[47] It is probable that Paul goes back even further than this command at Sinai to allude also to God's command in Genesis 2 (*Paradiesgebot*)[48] and Adam's covetousness in Genesis 3, since (despite the debate surrounding the identity of Ego) most admit that there are at least allusions to Adam here.[49]

Within these verses, Paul announces the beginning of Sin.[50] Before the Law, Sin was dead and had no opportunity to attack, but then this very Law that defined Sin awakened "in its addressee a resistance to its own authority."[51] However, much more than a resistance had been awakened—the Law aroused and fuelled a force greater than itself which would thus overtake it. Therefore, the Law is not simply "a reagent by which the presence of sin may be detected; it is a catalyst which aids or even initiates the action of sin upon man."[52]

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47 See J.A. Ziesler, "The Role of the Tenth Commandment in Romans 7 "*JSNT* 33 (1988), 41-56.

48 Similarly, many see "Sin" as present before the primeval command by identifying Sin with the serpent in Genesis 3; e.g. Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, vol. 2 (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), 83; Theobald, *Römerbrief Kapitel 1-11*, 209; Stanislaus Lyonnet, "L'histoire du salut selon le ch. 7 de l'épître auz Romains," *Biblica* 43 (1962),133; Barrett, *Romans*, 143; C.E.B. Cranfield, "St. Paul and the Law," *STJ* 17 (1964), 46; Mark A. Seifrid, *Christ, Our Righteousness* (Leicester: Apollos, 2000), 116; T.L. Carter, *Paul and the Power of Sin* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 186; and Klaus Haacker, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1999), 144.

49 "Es gibt nichts in unseren Versen, was nicht auf Adam passt, und alles passt nur auf Adam," [Ernst Käsemann, *An die Römer* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1980), 188]. Barrett sums it up, "Indeed, if Paul is not actually telling this story (of Adam) he is at least using it to bring out his point," [Barrett, *Romans*, 143]. See especially Hermann Lichtenberger, *Das Ich Adams und das Ich der Menschheit* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 1-328. See also Ziesler, "The Role of the Tenth Commandment in Romans 7 ", 47; Haacker, *Römer*,143-144; Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, trans. Scott J. Hafemann (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 106-107; A.J. Wedderburn, "Adam in Romans," in *Studia Biblica* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1978), 420-421; G. Theissen, *Psychologishe Aspekte Paulinischer Theologie* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983), Otfried Hofius, *Paulusstudien* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1989), 57; Wedderburn, "Adam in Romans," 421; N.T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 197; Stephen J. Chester, *Conversion at Corinth* (London: T & T Clark, 2003), 186-187; D. H. Campbell, "The Identity of εγω in Romans 7:7-25," *Studia Biblica* III (1978), 355-368; Jan Lambrecht, *The Wretched "I" and Its Liberation* (Louvain: Peeters Press, 1992), 83; Timo Laato, *Paul and Judaism*, trans. T. McElwain (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 109-111; and Adams, "Paul's Story," 26-28.

Against an allusion to Adam, see Troels Engberg-Pedersen, "The Reception of Graeco-Roman Culture in the New Testament: The Case of Romans 7.7-25," in *The New Testament as Reception* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2002), 32-57; and Moo, *Romans,* 348.

50 I.e. the beginning of Sin either in the Ego's life or within all of humanity, depending on the interpretation. Paul's emphasis is not so much the reign of Death as it is the evil work of Sin, as seen in the repetition of the statement in vv. 8 and 11.

51 Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark 2004), 359.

52 Barrett, *Romans*, 141.

Although Sin's entrance was dependent on the Law, Sin quickly overcame the Law and used it as a base to launch a deceptive attack on Ego, an attack which resulted in murder.

Here, Paul gives voice to Ego, who does not admit to (nor even mention) letting Sin in the world by the idolatry and sins of 1.18-32 or by the trespass and transgression of 5.12-21. Instead, Ego claims to be a victim of Sin. That is to say, for Ego, Sin is not an act committed, nor a sphere in which he dwells; rather, it is an evil force dwelling in him, working every illicit desire. Paul goes on to demonstrate the inverse relationship Ego has with the Law. When Sin was dead, before the Law, Ego was alive. However, when Sin sprang to life at the coming of the commandment, Ego died.[53] Paul concludes with a restatement: through the commandment, Sin brought Death, which proves the Law is not Sin. Rather, the Law is holy, righteous and good.

In Rom. 7.7-11, Ego could not avoid Sin and Death—for he proclaims that as soon as he experienced the command, he experienced the power of Sin reigning in Death. In Rom. 5.12-21 the emphasis is on more of a mutual responsibility between Sin and humanity, while in Romans 6 the stress is on the believer's action in the responsibility. Here however, it is on the role of Ego as victim and of Sin as deceiver. In other words, there is an *ad hoc* shift of emphasis to portray humanity as more of a victim of personified Sin rather than as a culprit. As a result, by marginalising humanity's role in this passage, now Ego has an excuse—the fault lies with Sin's manipulation of the Law rather than with him or the Torah.

The reason for this shift in emphasis is that Paul now desires to blame Sin's manipulation of the Law for evil rather than blaming the Law's influence on humanity or humankind's trespass of the Law.[54] With this done, Paul can exonerate the Law while simultaneously placing the Law in opposition to the Spirit and Grace. Paul concludes that Sin used the good Law to work death so that the sinfulness of Sin might be shown—Sin is a murderer and Ego a victim. In the following verses, the apostle demonstrates how this process occurs and now depicts Sin as a slave master and Ego as a prisoner of war.

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53 Paul switches his terminology slightly as he singles out the 10th commandment as a representation of the entire Law. Probably referring to the command to Adam not to eat from the tree, Paul states that the command came. He does not say that God gave the command, but as Sin and Law entered in Romans 5, so now, the command enters providing Sin with the opportunity for which it was waiting.

54 As we will see in the next passage, however, Paul still maintains human responsibility by including the desires of the flesh in partnership with Sin.

Rom. 7.14-25

[14] Οἴδαμεν γὰρ ὅτι ὁ νόμος πνευματικός ἐστιν, ἐγὼ δὲ σάρκινός εἰμι πεπραμένος ὑπὸ τὴν ἁμαρτίαν. [15] ὃ γὰρ κατεργάζομαι οὐ γινώσκω· οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλω τοῦτο πράσσω, ἀλλ' ὃ μισῶ τοῦτο ποιῶ. [16] εἰ δὲ ὃ οὐ θέλω τοῦτο ποιῶ, σύμφημι τῷ νόμῳ ὅτι καλός. [17] νυνὶ δὲ οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία. [18] Οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ οἰκεῖ ἐν ἐμοί, τοῦτ' ἔστιν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου, ἀγαθόν· τὸ γὰρ θέλειν παράκειταί μοι, τὸ δὲ κατεργάζεσθαι τὸ καλὸν οὔ· [19] οὐ γὰρ ὃ θέλω ποιῶ ἀγαθόν, ἀλλὰ ὃ οὐ θέλω κακὸν τοῦτο πράσσω.[20] εἰ δὲ ὃ οὐ θέλω [ἐγὼ τοῦτο ποιῶ, οὐκέτι ἐγὼ κατεργάζομαι αὐτὸ ἀλλὰ ἡ οἰκοῦσα ἐν ἐμοὶ ἁμαρτία. [21] εὑρίσκω ἄρα τὸν νόμον, τῷ θέλοντι ἐμοὶ ποιεῖν τὸ καλόν, ὅτι ἐμοὶ τὸ κακὸν παράκειται· [22] συνήδομαι γὰρ τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ θεοῦ κατὰ τὸν ἔσω ἄνθρωπον, [23] βλέπω δὲ ἕτερον Νόμον ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου ἀντιστρατευόμενον τῷ νόμῳ τοῦ νοός μου καὶ αἰχμαλωτίζοντά με ἐν τῷ Νόμῳ τῆς ἁμαρτίας τῷ ὄντι ἐν τοῖς μέλεσίν μου. [24] Ταλαίπωρος ἐγὼ ἄνθρωπος· τίς με ῥύσεται ἐκ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Θανάτου τούτου; [25] χάρις δὲ τῷ θεῷ διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν. Ἄρα οὖν αὐτὸς ἐγὼ τῷ μὲν νοὶ δουλεύω νόμῳ θεοῦ τῇ δὲ σαρκὶ Νόμῳ ἁμαρτίας.

For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am just the opposite, since I have been sold as a slave to Sin, I do not even know what I do. But I do that which I hate to do rather than that which I desire to do. But if I do not do that which I desire, I agree that the Law is good. But now, it is no longer me that does it: it is Sin dwelling in me. For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is to say, in my flesh. For the desire to do good is there: but I do not do good. For I do not do the good that I desire, rather I do the evil I do not desire. But if I do that which I do not desire, it is no longer me that does it: it is Sin dwelling in me. Therefore, I have found this law in me— that when I desire to do good, evil is close at hand. For I rejoice with the Law of God according to my inner man, but I see another law in my members waging war with the Law of my mind and making me a prisoner of war to the Law of Sin dwelling in my members. What a wretched man I am! Who shall rescue me from this body that belongs to Death? (But thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord.) Therefore then, on the one hand, in my mind, I am a slave to the Law of God but in my flesh to the Law of Sin.

Having manipulated the Law, Sin is now a slave master who dwells inside of Ego, who causes him to do evil, who wars against his godly desire and his mind, who holds him captive,[55] and who refuses to allow him to fulfil the Law. In order to distance the Law further from Sin, Paul makes Sin a law of her own and substitutes the word "Sin" with the phrase "Law of Sin."[56] Sin accomplishes all of her manipulating work without revealing herself, which exaggerates Ego's frustration even more.[57] This frustration causes Ego to cry out in despair.[58] Then, by using a transitional device in v. 25, Paul hints at the

55 According to Jewett, this is the first time that "sold under Sin" appears in Greek literature, and even then it is only restricted to the patristic writers, [Jewett, *Romans*, 461].

56 See Barrett, *Romans*, 149.

57 Cf. Gerd Theissen, *Psychological Aspects of Pauline Theology*, trans. John P. Galvin (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1987), 231; Chester, *Conversion*, 193; and Engberg-Pedersen, "Romans 7.7-25," 46-48.

58 According to Barrett, he cries out because the Law, "the last hope of mankind" has proven to be a "broken reed. Through Sin, it is no longer a comfort but an accusation," [Barrett, *Romans*, 151].

solution to Sin and Death that believers already possess, a solution which he explains further in Romans 8.[59]

The personification here differs slightly from the one in 5.12-21, where Sin was external to humanity and entered into the Cosmos to rule as a lord with Death because of sins. Here, rather than through humanity, Sin enters through the commandment. In 6.12-23, the audience hears that Sin can reign *in* their mortal bodies; and in 7.14-25, Paul develops this idea of indwelling Sin further. Therefore, rather than entering into the world as in 5.12, Sin enters into the body of Ego. However, whereas in Romans 6 the believer has power over Sin, here Sin is invasive, working desires inside of Ego whether Ego wants her to or not.

Within these few chapters, then, Sin has developed from an external force working with humanity to an internal, manipulative and tyrannical one working against them. That which once ruled over humanity, now stirs up sinful desires from within them. Nevertheless, there is a part of Ego that resists and regrets the work of Sin and his desires, so that he needs deliverance not only from Sin, but from his own flesh as well.

Through Romans 7, Paul reveals more about personified Sin. First, he emphatically tells the reader what Sin is not. In case one misunderstood, he makes clear that Sin is not the Law and the Law is not Sin. In fact, as we mentioned above, this exoneration of the Law is one primary purpose of this passage. Instead of being evil, the Law is holy, even though it remains the base of operations from which Sin works. Next, by Ego stating twice that Sin seized the opportunity through the commandment, he informs the reader that Sin needed two avenues in order to enter into the world: its existence in the world of humanity is all together contingent upon the Law and a human victim. Finally, Sin exists to increase illicit desires, to deceive, and then to murder. Although this experience is unavoidable, God does provide a remedy (e.g. Rom. 8.1-8).

4. The Characteristics of Personified Sin in Romans 5-7

Our investigation of the personification of Sin from Romans 5 to Romans 7 has revealed three distinct lights in which Sin is presented, which to our knowledge scholars have not discussed in detail. That is, Sin develops from an external force that universally rules over sinful humanity to that which is an internal force that can dwell within the Christian, if the believer accepts or

59 See Bruce W. Longenecker, *Rhetoric at the Boundaries* (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2005), 85-93. Longenecker demonstrates how Paul uses the common rhetorical chain-link interlock (A b a B) here, which serves as a transition so that "the one who speaks in 7:25a is not, then, the speaker of 7:7-24 and 25b. See also Barrett, *Romans*, 151.

initiates the relationship. In contrast to the culprits in Romans 5 (through whose transgressions Sin entered into the cosmos to rule) and to the believers in Romans 6 (who can allow Sin to reign if they so choose), the sinner in Romans 7 claims to be a victim of Sin which causes the person to do evil deeds despite his efforts and desires to perform the righteous requirement of the Law.

We believe this shows that Paul adapts the personification of Sin to illustrate whatever point he so desires. To describe how Sin and Death entered into the world, Paul presents them as external to both humanity and the cosmos. To demonstrate that all unredeemed humanity abides under the regime of Sin, he presents it as a ruler who shares the blame for evil. However, when the apostle desires to personify Sin for the sake of ethical exhortation, he develops Sin into an internal master who can and should be rejected. Now this battle is not in the cosmos out of their reach, it is war within them. Finally, when Paul desires to exonerate the Torah, he stresses the pernicious work of Sin who dwells undetected within the person until the Law exposes it.

5. The Purposes for the Personifications of Sin and Death

To distance God from the origin of evil

In chapter 2, we conveyed that one possible purpose of personification is to "expose the underlying principles of events."[60] So also here, by personifying Sin, Paul exposes the cause of evil in the world, personified Sin and the sin of the people. Tacit in the personification is an argument that God is not responsible for evil.[61] By personifying Sin and Death as enemies who are responsible for the current state of the world, Paul removes God from blame and sets the divine work in the gospel over against the personifications of evil; thereby, the apostle distances God from the cause of the problem in order to stress the divine solution for it. So also, the personification of Sin helps Paul exonerate the Law. Personified Sin takes over the Law and from it launches her attack on humanity. Therefore, the Law is not the cause of Sin and Death; and even though it leads to Sin and Death, it was intended for life.

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60 J. Whitman, *Allegory: The Dynamics of an Ancient and Medieval Technique* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 22.

61 The conviction that God was not involved with the entrance of evil was common with some Jewish traditions as well as some Greek philosophies that insisted that God played no role in the entrance of Death or Sin. E.g. 2 *Enoch* 30.14-15, *Ap. Sedrach* 4.5, Sir. 15.11-14, 17; Plato, *Rep*. 379B; *Tim*. 69C, Philo, *Mut. 30; Conf.* 179).

To establish the relationships between Sin and sinners

By personifying Sin, Paul demonstrates the relationship of her with people. In Rom. 5.12-21, Sin is the external ruler over unredeemed humanity because humanity sinned. In Romans 6, however, Paul discusses another relationship, that of Sin and believers. Here, Sin is a spurious lord who will continue to rule inside of them as long as the believers will let her. In Romans 7, Paul presents Sin as a deceiver, murderer and master of humanity.

Through the personification of Sin then, Paul merges, affirms and forcibly connects the abstract with the concrete,[62] the influence of evil with the person's sins and desires. This external force of evil enters into the world because of humanity's personal deeds. As a slave lord, abstract evil can control the concrete bodies of believers. Moreover, Sin works perniciously in Ego's body and with his flesh, which explains why he cannot live a holy life.

Furthermore, in a struggle to maintain his system of beliefs, namely that Grace liberates from Sin so that one should sin no longer, Paul sets up a rupture between two worlds[63]—the world as it should be (i.e. where the Christian does not sin) and the world as it is, which possibly to the regret of Paul is recognised in the misdeeds of his congregation. Such a rupture provides Paul a basis to command the believers through personification to make sure they behave as they should.

To explain sin and righteousness

Paul reveals one purpose for his personification of Sin in Rom. 6.19—"But I am speaking like a mere person because of your weakness." This phrase is ambiguous to modern readers (and was perhaps to Paul's original audience as well). For example, by weakness, does Paul mean spiritual weakness, that he must write these things because the Roman Christians are still abiding in Sin, or does he refer to intellectual weakness—that he frustratingly feels the need to descend to their level in order for them to understand his point of view?[64]

Paul's similar statements in Rom. 3.5 and Gal. 3.15 point to the latter; Paul feels the need to speak in this manner for the sake of clarification.[65] In Rom.

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62 Stephen A. Barney, *Allegories of History, Allegories of Love* (Hamden, Conn.: Archon Books, 1979), 20-24.

63 Edwin Honig, *Dark Conceit: the Making of Allegory* (London: Faber and Faber, 1959), 117.

64 Cf. Jewett, *Romans*, 419.

65 Such a statement parallels ancient teachers who regarded the use of tropes with disdain. See Plato, *Phaedrus* 265d1ff.; Cicero, *De Oratore* 3.53.205; Dio Chrysostom, *The Olympic Discourse* XII.1-6. Unless used carefully, tropes can cause confusion rather than aid in clarification. For example, if the comparison is not a perfect parallel, and when taken beyond

3.5, the apostle winces at his need to employ a rhetorical question which challenges God's righteousness. In Gal. 3.15, Paul discusses his metaphor in similar terms but considers it necessary for understanding. So also in Romans 6, Paul's statement probably points to "the frailty of human nature, which cannot grasp profound truth unless it is presented in human analogies."[66]

It is possible, however, that Paul also feels the need to use personification to explain sin and righteousness in terms his readers understand *because* some of them continue to abide in sin. He may therefore be implying that "they were constantly prone to live as though still slaves of sin, still ruled by the desires of this mortal body."[67] If this is the case, then Paul's statement would parallel Philo's conclusions that fools cannot understand the truth and will not seek righteousness without such fanciful images.[68] Therefore, the personifications of Sin and Death are used for explanatory purposes so that this picture of them as enemy tyrants makes them seem more real, concrete and personal in order to help the church fight these immoral passions which are to be fought down now that the people have been redeemed.[69]

Rather than as mere participants in sins, now the believers' bodies are actually weapons in the context of military domination and struggle between Sin and Righteousness.[70] This would serve to motivate the believers to avoid

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its original intention it becomes inappropriate and may imply that which the author never meant.

66 Barrett, *Romans*, 132. See also Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 264: "The natural man lacks spiritual discernment, and Paul evidently fears that some of his readers did not readily comprehend spiritual truths."

67 Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 355. Similarly, Cranfield concludes: "What is meant is the incomprehension, insensitiveness, insincerity and proneness to self-deception, which characterize the fallen human nature even of Christians," [Cranfield, *Romans*, 326]. So also, Thomas Schreiner argues that this does not point to specific moral failures but to people's corrupted Adamic nature in general [Schreiner, *Romans*, 333]. Käsemann rejects both an intellectual and an ethical explanation for weakness. Instead, he believes weakness points toward a temptation of the believers to misunderstand Paul's paradigm causing them to reject the idea of slavery as too much of a demand [Käsemann, *Romans*, 182].

68 Philo, *Quod Deus* 60-69.

69 See the purposes of personification according to C.S. Lewis, *The Allegory of Love* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 63. Cf. Philo, Leg. *All.* 3,193-194, where Philo speaks of Folly who guides the chariot of passions. He implores his audience not to be the slave of these masters who resist setting anyone free. If they run away from those masters they will be welcomed by the Master who loves slaves and will have the hope of freedom.

70 For Paul's metaphor of military domination in Paul's letters, see Jewett, *Romans*, 410-411.

evil and to live for God instead. After this description, perhaps it would prove difficult to use their body to sin without imagining this picture of the personification and its grave results.[71]

Conclusion

In this chapter, we proposed that there is a progression of Sin in Romans 5-7 from an external figure in partnership with humanity to an internal one in control over them. Such progression demonstrates how Paul adapts the personification to argue the point at hand. To the debate of whether Paul blames humanity or malefic powers for evil, we argued that although the stress may fall more on one than the other, through the personification of Sin in Romans 5-7, Paul places the blame on both external personifications of evil (whether he considers them real or not) and on humanity—unredeemed humanity because they sinned, the believer's because they can allow Sin to reign, and Ego because his flesh cooperates with Sin. Of these three groups, only part of Ego (the law of his mind) is pictured as victimised.

We inferred, then, that Paul's personifications of Sin and Death would serve 1) to place the blame for evil on both wicked powers and humanity in order to distance God from the entrance and work of evil in the world, 2) to explain the reality of the experience of the weak minds and wills of the Christians in Rome, and 3) to exonerate the Law as a victim to Sin rather than a villain with it.

71 Cf. Carter, *Paul and the Power of Sin*, 203.

Chapter 9

The Personification of the Law

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we argued that Paul presents the personifications of Sin and Death in different lights, depending on the point he seeks to make. In order to distance God from the origin of evil, he personifies Sin and Death as external rulers who enter into the world and stand over against the work of God through Christ. On the other hand, in order to demonstrate the illegitimate participation of believers with Sin, he depicts Sin as both an external master and an internal lord that must be overthrown rather than allowed to reign. Finally, in order to exonerate the Law, the apostle stresses the power of Sin, who as an internal power works perniciously through the Law to murder Ego and enslave him. As we have already seen, at times Paul places Sin in close relationship with the Law. While many have discussed this relationship, we shall explore it further by examining it in light of the personification of the Law.

Paul's understanding of the Law and its relationship with Sin is complex, if not inconsistent.[1] This complexity comes from Paul's "twin convictions that the law does not save," but at the same time that "it must have been part and parcel of God's overall plan."[2] Such convictions create a problem with the Law, one that Paul wrestles with rather than solves.[3] In order to maintain these two convictions, Paul begins with bold, unqualified conclusions concerning the Law. In Rom. 3.20, Nomos speaks *not* to rescue humanity from evil as much as to condemn them in it. Likewise, in 4.15, the Law does not bring salvation but wrath—for without the Law trespass does not exist. In 5.20-7.6, Nomos appears to be evil, a partner and co-ruler with Sin as it enters to increase trespass and rule until death.

When one gets to 7.7-12, however, Nomos is the victim—something holy, and intended for life, which has been taken advantage of, ambushed by Sin.

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1 See Heikki Räisänen, *Paul and the Law*, 2nd ed. (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987), xi-xxxi; and E.P. Sanders, "Paul," in *Early Christian thought in its Jewish context*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and John Sweet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 117.

2 E.P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People* (London: SCM, 1983), 151.

3 Sanders, "Paul," 123.

Feelings of frustration with the Law are perhaps given over to sympathy for it. But in 7.13-8.5, Paul informs the reader that Nomos was working under cover all the time. Although Nomos seemed to be a friend of Sin, it is really holy; it betrayed Sin and exposed Sin's insidious ways so that Ego would come to understand the reason for his impotence to do the good he desires. Nomos may reveal Sin, but the work of Christ and the Spirit finish the task by condemning it.[4]

In order to explain this complicated relationship between Sin and Law, Paul resorts to personification in 3.19-20, 5.20 and 7.1-6. We shall now discuss these personifications in turn. First, we shall look at the Law as that which condemns humanity (3.19-20), then as that which enters into the cosmos (5.20), followed by the Law as that which rules over unredeemed humanity (7.1-6). We shall conclude that, in an attempt to answer why God sent a Law that was impotent to save, Paul uses personification to bring out the negative aspects of Nomos in order to distance the Law from God's work of salvation.

Of these personifications, there are times when Nomos represents scripture in general; at other times, it stands for the Law of Sinai. For example, in 3.19-20, Nomos encompasses, but is not limited to, the catena of references Paul just listed (3.10-18).[5] However, in 5.20 and 7.1-6, Nomos stands for the Law of Sinai.

1. The Law Condemns Humanity (Rom. 3.19-20)

Although "the bible says," may be a common modern expression, NT writers would most commonly cite OT scriptures with the phrases, "It is written," the 'prophet'[6] or the "Lord says," rather than with, "Scripture says."[7] And, in most cases when scripture speaks, the personification is not developed and

4 For a more detailed discussion of the revealing role of the Law, see Stephen J. Chester, *Conversion at Corinth* (London: T & T Clark, 2003), 183-195. "The divine logic in providing the law would then be that only when sin is out in the open can it be dealt with, only when the poison has come to a head can the boil be lanced," [James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 299].

5 See Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 152; Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 264; C.K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 70; and Leander E. Keck, *Romans* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 99.

6 E.g. Moses (Rom. 9.15; 10.19), Isaiah (Rom. 10.16, 15.12), Hosea (Rom. 9.25), David (Rom. 4.6; 11.9).

7 E.g. Graphe or Nomos. Outside of the writings of Paul, the only biblical record of "Nomos says" occurs is in the first century C.E. document 4 Macc. 2.5. Moreover, there are only two other places Nomos speaks in the NT—1 Cor. 9.8 and 14.34. Therefore, this concept may not have been as common as a modern person might think. Cf. Mt. 11.13 and Jn. 7.51. In later Jewish writings, the question is asked, "what did Torah say?" This could point to a tradition during the time of Paul. See H. Strack and P. Billerbeck, *Kommentar zum Neuen Testament aus Talmud und Midrasch*, vol. 3 (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche, 1926), 538.

most likely serves chiefly as an introductory citation.[8] Nevertheless, the personification of Nomos in 3.19 is more unusual because Paul employs a verb which emphasises the act of speech and follows it with a courtroom metaphor. Furthermore, Paul does personify the Law in at least two other places in Romans.

In 3.19, Paul says:

[19] οἴδαμεν δὲ ὅτι ὅσα ὁ Νόμος λέγει τοῖς ἐν τῷ νόμῳ λαλεῖ, ἵνα πᾶν στόμα φραγῇ καὶ ὑπόδικος γένηται πᾶς ὁ κόσμος τῷ θεῷ·	For we know that whatever Nomos says, it speaks to those in the Law, so that every mouth may be shut and the whole world be made accountable to God.

Also relevant here is Paul's use of λαλεῖν ("to speak") rather than λέγειν ("to say"). Whereas λέγειν places emphasis on that which is spoken, λαλεῖν focuses on the act of speaking.[9] That is to say, having given an extensive list of verses to prove his point, Paul changes his focus from what is said to who *says* it, expressing "the notion that the Law 'speaks' directly to its adherents."[10] Moreover, with the verb λαλεῖν combined with the present tense verb, the stress is on the perpetual act of speaking,[11] so that Nomos continues to convict people every time he opens his mouth.[12]

Therefore, according to Paul, even Nomos himself insists that no one is made righteous by works of the Law. That is to say, Paul personifies the very thing which his opponents believe to bring righteousness: Nomos is the speaker who claims otherwise. "The Law declares that 'works of the Law' are not the way to righteousness…that sinful human beings are incapable of attaining to life by this means."[13]

The words which follow evoke a courtroom setting where the defendant, having been accused, stands speechless without excuse before the judge. Nomos speaks then so that no one else, particularly Jews,[14] would be able to mutter a defence—that every mouth may be shut and the whole world may be

8 Cf. Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark 2004), 43-47; Vernon K. Robbins, *Exploring the Texture of Texts* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 41-42; Vernon K. Robbins, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse* (London: Routledge, 1996), 102-108; and Christopher D. Stanley, *Paul and the Language of Scripture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 253.

9 C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 10th ed., ICC, vol. I (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001), 196.

10 Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 264.

11 Cf. God's attributes which continue to be made visible since the creation of the world (1.20) and the ῥῆμα of the heavens which continues to go out to the ends of the world (10.18).

12 Cf. 2 Cor. 3.15.

13 Watson, *Hermeneutics*, 68-69.

14 That this indictment is against the Jews has been convincingly argued in Simon J. Gathercole, *Where is Boasting?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002), 212-215.

accountable to God.[15] Thus, rather than as the advocate of the Jews, Nomos stands as their prosecutor.

2. The Law Enters into the World (Rom. 5.20)

[20] Νόμος δὲ παρεισῆλθεν, ἵνα πλεονάσῃ τὸ Παράπτωμα·	But Nomos entered so that trespass would abound.

In Rom. 5.20, Paul does not specifically refer to the Law as a divine gift or agent; rather than something simply to be understood or followed, now Nomos is "an actor to be reckoned with."[16] Instead of coming in a glorious mountain-top experience, Nomos "slipped into" (παρεισέρχομαι) the world; it came not to solve or treat the human tendency to sin and thereby ameliorate the Adamic legacy but rather to inflame sin, making Adam's plight and enmity with God "ever more vicious and pervasive."[17]

The verb παρεισέρχομαι carried a negative connotation throughout much of the Greco-Roman world at the time.[18] Modern commentators suggest various interpretations for the verb. For example, Jewett sees the use of παρεισέρχομαι as Paul's attempt to demote the role of Law as a guide to life.[19] Similarly, Moo concludes that Paul utilised this negative word to show the Law had "no power fundamentally to alter the situation."[20] Likewise, Sanday and Headlam understand Paul's use of παρεισέρχομαι as a way to demonstrate that the giving of the Law was "secondary and subordinate."[21] Agreeing on an intentional negative overtone, Dunn points to Paul's employment of the double prefix (παρεισ-) rather than a mere repetition of εἰσῆλθον (v.12) and goes on to suggest that Paul utilises παρεισέρχομαι in order to explain the Law as inferior to grace.[22]

Cranfield, on the other hand, disagrees with a negative use of this verb. Instead, he opts for the significance of the verb as a neutral reference to the Law coming at a later date.[23] Otfried Hofius also argues that παρεισέρχομαι

15 Jewett connects the shutting of mouths with the references to throats, tongues, lips and mouths in the previous verses (Jewett, *Romans*, 265).

16 Keck, *Romans*, 154.

17 Jewett, *Romans*, 388.

18 See Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 347.

19 Jewett, *Romans*, 387.

20 Moo, *Romans*, 347-348.

21 William Sanday and Arthur C. Headlam, *The Epistle to the Romans*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1895), 139. See also Barrett, *Romans*, 117 and Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 295.

22 Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 286.

23 Cranfield, *Romans*, 292. See also John Murray, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 4th ed., NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993), 207. This is in contrast to Haacker who insists that in light

should not be seen in a negative sense; instead, Hofius claims that with the verb Paul is placing the Torah on the same side as Sin, Death and Adam.[24] It seems, however, that being secondary to the promise, inferior to grace as well as belonging to the side of Sin, Death, and Adam, the Torah does carry negative connotations, at least when it παρεισῆλθεν.[25]

What is most significant here, however, which scholars have tended not to take into account, is Paul's personification of the Law. It is striking that Paul does not present the Law as directly sent or given by God here, but as actively entering on its own.[26] Just as Sin entered (εἰσ**ῆλθεν**) into the world and as Death spread (δι**ῆλθεν**) to all humanity, so also Nomos entered (παρεισ**ῆλθεν**).[27] Rather than saying that God directly gave the Law,[28] Paul personifies the Law by using παρεισέρχομαι,[29] a word which can be used of a person who enters into a place with his true identity and character concealed.

For instance, Plutarch uses the verb for Coriolanus who disguised himself in order to go behind enemy lines and incite a war with Rome.[30] Coriolanus identifies his trick with that of Ulysses, who pretended to be a beggar as he entered the town of his mortal foes.[31] Similarly, Polybius uses the verb to refer to mercenaries who enter (παρεισελθόντες) Messene under the guise of friendship (lit: ὡς φίλιοι) only to kill the men and to steal the women.[32] It is in

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of Gal. 2.4: "dieses nachträgliche Hinzukommen des Gesetzes ist nicht gerade schmeichelhaft," [Klaus Haacker, *Der Brief des Paulus an die Römer* (Leipzig: Evangelische Verlagsanstalt, 1999), 122].

24 Otfried Hofius, "The Adam-Christ Antithesis and the Law: Reflections on Romans 5.12-21," in *Paul and the Mosaic Law*, ed. James D. G. Dunn (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 199.

25 Cf. Daniel B. Wallace, "Galatians 3:19-20: A Crux Interpretum for Paul's View of the Law," Westminster Theological Journal 52 (1990), 235.

26 In fact, nowhere in Romans does Paul explicitly say God gave the νόμος. Often when the apostle comes closest to the presentation of Law being given by God, he employs different terms [τὰ λόγια (3.2), ἡ νομοθεσία (9.4)]. In Rom. 7.9, Paul does not use a divine passive to refer to the introduction of the Law. Although Paul does not cut the strings between God and the Law—which is indeed still ὁ νόμος τοῦ θεοῦ (v. 13, 22, 25; 8.7; 9.4)—in Rom. 8.3, the apostle still places the impotent Law in juxtaposition with God's ultimate agent, his son.

27 Cf. Seneca, *Ep.* XC.6, where he says that all was well until Vice crept in and created a need for laws.

28 Dunn correctly concludes: "Far from being an instrument of God in the epoch of grace," the Law came in from "off-stage to reinforce the power of sin and death over Adam's race," [Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 299].

29 According to Jewett, it is "a verb used in contexts of unwanted and illegitimate entry by people and of the insertion of an object into an area where it would not ordinarily belong," [Jewett, *Romans*, 387]. Philo uses the verb with unwanted desires. For example, in *Op.* 150, Adam has no problem naming the animals since "the rational nature in the soul had not yet been diluted because neither Infirmity or Disease or Passion had slipped in" (Lit: παρεισεληλυθότος). Cf. *Abr.* 96.

30 Plutarch, *Lives* XXIII.

31 Ibid. See Homer, *Odyssey* XIII.390-440.

32 Polybius, *Histories* I.VII.1-7.

this sense that Paul uses the verb in its only other occurrence in the bible, where false teachers pretending to be friends to the Galatian church come to enslave it (Gal. 2.4).[33] Similarly, Jude employs a related verb (παρεισέδυσαν) to describe the heretics who had entered the church as false-friends only to turn grace into a license to sin.[34] Within all of these cases, the verb is used of those who disguise their true identities, namely, enemies of those with whom now they dwell.

Although a single technical meaning should not be transferred into the verb,[35] here with παρεισέρχομαι, Paul seems to bringing out a similar idea. The coming of the Law was different than it appeared: the friend that appeared to bring justification actually condemns (3.19-20), to save from Sin actually strengthened Sin's grip (5.20), to liberate sinners actually lords over them (7.1), to give life actually resulted in Death (7.9-11). Ironically, as we saw in 7.9-25, Nomos, which had appeared to be a friend of Sin with whom it reigned, in reality serves to expose Sin.

So far, Paul has personified Nomos as that which comes into the world to condemn humanity and increase trespass.[36] Paul shall now personify the Law one last time in Romans: Nomos rules over unredeemed humanity.

3. The Law as Lord (Rom. 7.1-6)

[1] "Ἢ ἀγνοεῖτε, ἀδελφοί, γινώσκουσιν γὰρ Νόμον λαλῶ, ὅτι ὁ Νόμος κυριεύει τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐφ' ὅσον χρόνον ζῇ;
[2] ἡ γὰρ ὕπανδρος γυνὴ τῷ ζῶντι ἀνδρὶ δέδεται νόμῳ· ἐὰν δὲ ἀποθάνῃ ὁ ἀνήρ, κατήργηται ἀπὸ τοῦ Νόμου τοῦ ἀνδρός.
[3] ἄρα οὖν ζῶντος τοῦ ἀνδρὸς μοιχαλὶς χρηματίσει ἐὰν γένηται ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ· ἐὰν δὲ ἀποθάνῃ ὁ ἀνήρ, ἐλευθέρα ἐστὶν ἀπὸ τοῦ Νόμου, τοῦ μὴ εἶναι αὐτὴν μοιχαλίδα γενομένην ἀνδρὶ ἑτέρῳ.
[4] ὥστε, ἀδελφοί μου, καὶ ὑμεῖς ἐθανατώθητε τῷ

To those of you who know the Law, do you not also know that the Law lords over a person as long as that person lives? For example, a married woman is bound to her husband as long as he lives, but if he dies, she has been set free from the law which bound her to the husband. Therefore, if the woman unites with another man while her husband is living, she shall be called an adulteress. But if her husband dies, she is liberated from the law, so that she is not an adulteress when she unites with another man. So then, people,

33 διὰ δὲ τοὺς παρεισάκτους ψευδαδέλφους, οἵτινες παρεισῆλθον κατασκοπῆσαι τὴν ἐλευθερίαν ἡμῶν ἣν ἔχομεν ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ, ἵνα ἡμᾶς καταδουλώσουσιν (here, Paul uses three statements to stress the disguise and false pretence of his opponents— παρεισάκτους ψευδαδέλφους, and παρεισῆλθον.

34 Jude 4.

35 See James Barr, *The Semantics of Biblical Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), Reprint, 218-220.

36 The singular "trespass" could indicate the increase in the seriousness of sin rather than an increase in number. However, the latter should not be altogether discounted [Schreiner, *Romans*, 296]. Cf. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 299. According to Morris, however, Paul merely uses trespass as a synonym for sin and is not concerned with distinctions among grades of evil [Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 241].

Νόμῳ διὰ τοῦ σώματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ, εἰς τὸ γενέσθαι ὑμᾶς ἑτέρῳ, τῷ ἐκ νεκρῶν ἐγερθέντι, ἵνα καρποφορήσωμεν τῷ θεῷ. 5ὅτε γὰρ ἦμεν ἐν τῇ σαρκί, τὰ παθήματα τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν τὰ διὰ τοῦ Νόμου ἐνηργεῖτο ἐν τοῖς μέλεσιν ἡμῶν, εἰς τὸ καρποφορῆσαι τῷ θανάτῳ· 6νυνὶ δὲ κατηργήθημεν ἀπὸ τοῦ Νόμου ἀποθανόντες ἐν ᾧ κατειχόμεθα, ὥστε δουλεύειν ἡμᾶς ἐν καινότητι πνεύματος καὶ οὐ παλαιότητι γράμματος.

through the body of Christ, you were also put to death to the Law, so that you can be united with another, the one who was raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit to God. For when we were in the flesh, the passions of our sins were working in our members through the Law so that we bore fruit to death. But now, we have been set free from the Law, dying to that in which we were enslaved, so that we serve in the newness of the Spirit and not the old letter of the Law.

Thus far, Paul has referred to Sin and Death as those which lord (κυριεύω) and rule (βασιλεύω) over all unredeemed humanity (5.14, 17, 21; 6.9, 12, 14). Already the apostle has equated the lordship of Sin with being under Law (6.14) and personified the Law as entering under the guise of a friend to increase trespass (5.20). Now Paul goes so far as to personify Law as a lord itself allied with Sin and Death in order to enslave humanity.[37] Yet, the believers have been liberated from the reign and bondage of the Law (as well as personified Sin and Death) due their participation in the death of Christ.

In order to explain this liberation from personified Law, Paul employs a metaphor of marriage.[38] The purpose for the metaphor of marriage is to discuss the relationship of the Law and the believer who is now free from the Law.[39] Just as a civil law binding a woman to her husband is valid as long at the husband lives, so also Nomos ruled over the believer until her husband, the "παλαιὸς ἄνθρωπος,"[40] died with Christ to Sin and Death. Paul has already insisted that Sin no longer has claim over the life of the believer; here, he proclaims that neither does the Law. Their reign has been surpassed by that of Grace and Christ. Therefore, Paul declares that the believer should walk in the newness of the Spirit rather than the old way of the Law, through which Sin works to produce death (v. 6).[41]

There are parallels between the contrast of the Law and new life in Christ in Romans 6 and 7. Just as believers have died to Sin through their

37 Schreiner, *Romans*, 295.

38 Paul uses this same pattern of personification followed by a metaphor in 3.19-20.

39 According to Anderson, the metaphor actually muddles Paul's point [R. Dean Anderson Jr., *Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Paul* (Leuven: Peeters, 1999), 231]. This is against Lee Keck's conclusion that the confusion actually occurs due to mistranslating "therefore" as "in the same way," [See Keck, *Romans*, 176]. However, despite how one translates the passage, a metaphor in its essence evokes comparison and thus implies "in the same way." Cf. Keith Augustus Burton, *Rhetoric, Law, and the Mystery of Salvation in Romans 7:1-6* (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 2001), 79-98.

40 According to Wright, this is one of Paul's most misunderstood analogies since many claim the Nomos is the husband [N.T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 196].

41 Paul mentions these two ways earlier in 2.29—letter versus Spirit—and later in 8.5-8—flesh versus Spirit. For Paul's connexion of letter and Torah, see Moo, *Romans*, 421 fn. 68.

participation with Christ (Rom. 6.1-11), so they have also died to the Law. In Romans 6, Paul admonishes his audience to refuse Sin the opportunity to reign in their members, since the wages of Sin is death; here, he reminds the audience that when Sin reigned in their flesh it produced death (7.5). Finally, just as believers were set free from the reign of Sin so that they could serve righteousness (Rom. 6.18), so also they have been set free from Law and can now serve in the newness of the Spirit instead (7.6).

So far then, we have seen the personification of Law stand up to condemn the world in their sin rather than to save them from it and as coming into the world to increase trespass rather than curtail it. Here, Nomos is a ruler whose reign, like that of Sin and Death, has ended in the lives of the believers, for whom there is now no condemnation (cf. 3.19-20; 8.1) since they have been set free from the Law (7.6), Sin and Death (8.2).

4. The Purposes for the Personification of the Law

To distance the Law from God's work of salvation

As we discussed in the last chapter, in order to distance God from the origin of evil in the world, Paul personifies Sin and Death as rulers whose entrance into the world is opposed to the work of God. However, the presence of Sin and Death in the world leads to another problem: why did the Law that God sent fail to save human beings from this situation?

To solve this dilemma, Paul once again resorts to personification. By employing personification, Paul distances the work of the Law from God's work of salvation.[42] In contrast to Righteousness by Faith,[43] Nomos speaks to condemn humanity. As opposed to God sending his son, Nomos enters under a guise. Rather than to eliminate Sin, Nomos came to increase trespass. Just as the believers have died to Sin and Death, so they have also died to the Law that they may belong to Christ. In other words, by personifying Law, Paul avoids the issue of why God sent a law not strong enough to eradicate Sin and too weak even to resist it:[44] rather than God directly sending the Law to save people,[45] Nomos enters to condemn and rule over them.

42 This is not to say that Paul disconnects God from the Law. Cf. Dale B. Martin, *The Corinthian Body* (London: Yale University Press, 1995), 134-135; Hans Hübner, *Law in Paul's Thought*, trans. James C. G. Greig (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1984), 27 and J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians* (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 354, 357, 364-365.

43 See next chapter.

44 Contra Sanders, *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People*, 75.

45 Paul employs a similar rhetorical strategy in Gal. 3.19. There, he connects the Law to angels as he seeks to demonstrate the superiority of God's direct and eternal promise to Abraham over the inferiority of the indirectly given and temporary Torah. Richard Longenecker correctly insists: "It is almost impossible to read 'ordained through angels' in any other way

This conclusion supports the argument that, rather than a neutral connotation (e.g. simply implying that the Law was given at a later date), the connotation of παρεισέρχομαι should be taken negatively; as scholars have suggested, it points to the Law as powerless, secondary, inferior and placed on the same side as Sin, Death and Adam. In addition to these suggestions by scholars, we suggest the verb carries negative connotations because the apostle personifies Nomos as its subject in order to distance God's work of salvation from a Law which does not save but condemns, which does not remedy Sin but rules with it, and which does not bring life but results in death.

To appeal to authority

That the Law renders one impotent before Sin and that it condemns rather than saves would have been unpopular views among many Jews and God-fearers during Paul's time.[46] In fact, the role Paul attributes to the Law must have seemed shocking, if not the "blackest treachery to many of his countrymen,"[47] for in a "few terse words he turns the role of the law completely on its head."[48] Paul argues this controversial point by appealing to the authority of scripture in Rom. 3.20.

Such a strategy was common as authors often cite quotations as arguments from authority to anticipate debate regarding their questionable statements, which are in danger of being challenged.[49] Therefore, authors use quotations to "lead the audience into a mediated encounter with the original

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than with the intent 'to depreciate the law as not given directly by God,' [Richard N. Longenecker, *Galatians*, WBC (Dallas, TX: Word, 2002), 140; See also Bruce W. Longenecker, *The Triumph of Abraham's God* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 59, 62; and Ernest De Witt Burton, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1921), 189]. So also, F.F. Bruce rightly concludes, "There is, indeed, not much difference between this statement [Gal. 3.19] and that of Rom 5.20a, except that there is no word of angels there," [F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, NIGTC (Grand Rapids: Paternoster, 1982), 176 [brackets mine]. Just as Paul demonstrates the superiority of the promise over the Law in Galatians 3, the apostle shows the superiority of Grace over Law and Sin in Rom. 5.20. Furthermore, just as the Law caused trespass (παράβασις) in Gal. 3.19, it increases transgressions (παράπτωμα) in Rom. 5.20. By connecting the constitution of the Law with angels in Gal. 3.19, Paul distances God from the Law; by personifying the Nomos in Rom. 5.20, he does the same.

46 So also, that the Law was "a temporal restriction would have been preposterous" in the Judaism of Paul's day [Longenecker, *Triumph*, 118]. See, for example, Pseudo-Philo, *Bib. Ant.* 23.10.

47 Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 299.

48 Ibid.

49 Christopher D. Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture* (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 13: by claiming the voice of Scripture as one's own, an author can increase the chances that an audience will adopt or reject the set of beliefs that the author recommends or opposes, (p. 27).

text, where a second, more powerful voice speaks on behalf of the quoting author."[50] So also here, rather than just quoting scripture, in 3.20, Paul actuallyhas the Law speak on his behalf so that it becomes his witness and delivers the *coup de grâce*[51] to those trusting in the Law to save them.

Paul's personification of Law as contemporary witnesses has a precedent in the OT and parallels in Greco-Roman literature.[52] In the Jewish witness tradition, impersonal objects such as heaven and earth would be called forth as witnesses. For example, in Deuteronomy 31, the Song "speaks up" (עָנָה) as the Lord's witness against the children of Israel (v. 21). So also the scroll of Torah stands up as a witness against them (Deut. 31.19, 21, 26).[53]

Similarly, Socrates gives voice to the Laws (*nomoi*) to prove his point as he explains to his grieving friend the reason why he must remain in prison until his execution. "Imagine that the Laws come and interrogate me and they ask me, 'Socrates, will you overturn us by your act?'" The *Nomoi* go on to chide anyone who claims to support the State but is still willing to set aside their rules no matter how unjust the sentence.[54] So also, Cicero gives voice to *res publica* as his witness against Catiline. In case his audience will not listen to him, Cicero defers to the voice of his Fatherland (*patria),* which argues Cicero's case so that to reject the argument is to reject their own homeland.[55] Elsewhere, in his argument, Cicero says that the Laws stretch out their hand to provide the Senate a sword for the sake of punishing the offender.[56]

Therefore, as Moses presents the Torah to testify against Israel, as Socrates and Cicero call forth Nomoi to be their witnesses, so also Paul calls Nomos to testify against those trusting in any other way to salvation outside of his gospel. As with Cicero's Nomoi, the Law reaches forth its hand to pass judgment upon those rejecting Paul's gospel. Similar to Socrates' personification of *Nomoi*, Paul has Nomos speak to prove that no person is above the Law; and like Moses' personification of the Torah, Paul's Nomos

50 Ibid., 32.

51 Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 158.

52 Cf. Jos. 22.27-34; 24.27; Job 16.8; 1 Cor. 10.6.

53 For more on this passage and its parallels, see Georg Braulik, *Deuteronomium II 16,18-34,12* (Würzburg: Echter Verlag, 1992), 224-226 and Jeffrey H. Tigay, *Deuteronomy* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1996), 295-297. Heaven and Earth are also called to witness against Israel in Deut. 31.28 (see also 4.26, 30.19). Similarly, Isaiah calls for his words to be written so that they can testify to future generations against those who would not listen to the Torah (30.8-9); see John N. Oswalt, *The Book of Isaiah: Chapters 1-39*, NICOT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 548-551 and Brevard S. Childs, *Isaiah* (Louisville, KY: Westminister John Knox Press, 2001), 226.

54 Plato, *Crito* 50a-54d

55 Cicero, *In Catilinam* I.27-28,

56 Cicero, *Pro Milone* III.8-9. Cf. Philo, *Leg. All*. 3.118.

speaks to show the Jews that their own Law places them firmly "in the dock."[57]

Conclusion

As we have investigated Paul's view of the Law in light of his personification of it, we have discovered that when the apostle personifies Nomos he does so to bring out the negative functions of the Law which stand in contrast to God's saving work through Christ. Nomos is not the saviour but the prosecutor, who came into the world under a guise: despite what may have appeared to be the case, Nomos entered *not* to condemn Sin in people but to condemn people in Sin; *not* to remedy transgressions but to increase trespass (5.20); and *not* to liberate humanity but to lord over them (7.1-6). We have argued that such a depiction supports the interpretation that παρεισέρχομαι in 5.20 carries negative connotations.

It is striking that of the personifications which we have investigated so far, we have seen that Paul uses the trope to get around difficult issues. For example, in the last chapter, the personifications of Sin and Death explain the problem of evil so that God is distanced from its origin. In this chapter, the personification of Nomos distances the Law from the work of God in Christ to elucidate why the Law failed to remedy the condition of Sin and Death. Moreover, in the last chapter, we saw that Paul personifies Sin to demonstrate that the Law is not Sin, but here, Paul personifies the Law to show that neither is it the gospel.

57 Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 152.

Chapter 10

The Personifications of Grace and Righteousness

Introduction

In chapter 8, we saw that personified Sin and Death entered into the world to rule over unredeemed humanity. Similarly, in chapter 9, we discussed how personified Law entered into the world to condemn human beings and to lord over them. These personifications share a common purpose, namely, to explain the difficult problems of why evil exists in God's world and why God's law did not remedy the situation. Another thing they have in common is that they stand in contrast to personified Grace and Righteousness.

Paul's first personification of Grace occurs in Rom. 5.21 where it stands in juxtaposition to the personifications of Sin and Death; just as Sin reigns through Death, so also Grace reigns through righteousness. Similarly, in 6.16, the apostle argues that one can either obey Sin or Obedience[1] as their master. The former results in Death and the latter results in Righteousness. Furthermore, Paul's pronouncement in 6.15, that the believers are no longer under Law but Grace, probably refers back to the regime of personified Grace in 5.21.

It is Righteousness (Dikaiosyne), however, which goes on to represent the alternative to the slavery of Sin in Romans 6. For example, in 6.18-20, having been set free from the lordship of Sin, the believers instead became slaves to Dikaiosyne, to whom, Paul reasons, they should now present the members of their bodies for service. In a restatement of v. 18, Paul underlines the old bondage of Sin which contrast the new freedom of Righteousness. Moreover, Paul not only places Dikaiosyne in juxtaposition with Sin but also with the Law in 10.5-6. There (as we shall argue) Righteousness by Faith speaks in order to contrast the written words of Moses in Lev. 18.5.

We shall now discuss these personifications further. We shall begin with the reign of Grace through righteousness in 5.21 (1), followed by the depiction

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1 Due to the awkward nature of a person obeying Obedience, some scholars have argued that this is a slip of the pen, a dittography, so that Paul really meant to write "Righteousness" here. See Matthew Black, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), 97-98; Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 417.

of Righteousness as a slave-master in 6.18-20 (2). We will seek to demonstrate that grace develops from an instrument of God to make believers righteous and a sphere in which Christians stand to a personified ruler over them. So also, righteousness develops from a status and gift of believers to a slave master over them. Next, we shall explore the speech of Righteousness by Faith in 10.6 (3). Finally, purposes for the personifications will be proposed.

It will be concluded that the personifications are used to present the two paths of life. Whereas the rule of personified Sin, Death and Law represent the road to destruction, Grace and Righteousness fill out the alternative way which leads to eternal life. Furthermore, just as Paul personifies Law to distance it from God's saving work, he personifies Righteousness by Faith to distant God's work of salvation from the Law. Paul gives voice to Dikaiosyne as he did to Nomos—the latter testifies that the Law does not save and the former that the gospel does.

1. Grace Rules through Righteousness (Rom. 5.20b-21)

οὗ δὲ ἐπλεόνασεν ἡ ἁμαρτία, ὑπερεπερίσσευσεν ἡ χάρις, 21 ἵνα ὥσπερ ἐβασίλευσεν ἡ ἁμαρτία ἐν τῷ θανάτῳ, οὕτως καὶ ἡ χάρις βασιλεύσῃ διὰ δικαιοσύνης εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον διὰ Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν.

But where Sin abounds, Grace abounds all the more, in order that just as Sin reigned with Death so also Grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

After discussing personified Sin, Death and the Law, Paul finally introduces personifications which represent the new realm established by Christ. Having demonstrated the surpassing effects of Christ's obedience over the sins of humanity, Paul uses personifications to elucidate the surpassing reign of Grace[2] through righteousness to that of Sin and Death.[3] Although Sin and Death entered into the cosmos, "now a greater power has invaded the world."[4] It is not the Law, but personified Grace who answers the multiplication and domination of Sin.[5]

Hans Conzelmann notes two important developments of χάρις in Hellenism which are relevant here. First, χάρις became "a fixed term for

2 According to Cranfield, Paul is referring to the grace which abounded from the cross over against the sin which abounded when Israel handed Christ over to be crucified, [C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 10th ed., ICC, vol. I (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001), 293-294].

3 "The different tenses used of grace's work…would remind his readers that Paul is talking in terms of a whole epoch. As sin and death encompass the whole of the old epoch, so grace encompasses the whole of the new," [James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 300].

4 Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 296.

5 Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 300.

demonstrations of a ruler's favour"; and second, a magic "potency that streams down from the world above."[6] In 5.20b-21, rather than being a demonstration of a ruler's favour, Grace is the ruler herself; Grace is presented as a power who now reigns through righteousness.[7] Therefore a development occurs here: no longer is grace just an instrument by which God makes the believer righteous (3.24), nor is it merely a sphere in which the believer stands (5.2). Rather, now Grace is a ruler who surpasses Sin, disposes Death and restores righteousness.[8]

The reign of Grace parallels that of believers in v. 17,

[17] εἰ γὰρ τῷ τοῦ ἑνὸς παραπτώματι ὁ θάνατος ἐβασίλευσεν διὰ τοῦ ἑνός, πολλῷ μᾶλλον οἱ τὴν περισσείαν τῆς χάριτος καὶ τῆς δωρεᾶς τῆς δικαιοσύνης λαμβάνοντες ἐν ζωῇ βασιλεύσουσιν διὰ τοῦ ἑνὸς Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.	For if by the one trespass, Death reigned through the one man, how much more will those receiving the abundance of *grace* and the gift of *righteousness* reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

In v. 17, the people who were at one time under the reign of Sin and Death shall become the rulers who will reign in grace and righteousness.[9] In v. 21, however, we see yet another development of the concept of grace; the reign of the believers, who have received grace and righteousness, now becomes the reign of Grace herself. Barrett is probably correct in his inference that one reason Paul supplies this statement about the reign of Grace is to qualify v. 17: people do not reign on their own but by grace.[10] We shall propose an additional purpose for the personification below.

The goal of Grace was not merely the dispossession of the usurper Sin, it was to replace Sin's reign with righteousness.[11] Although righteousness is the instrument of Grace's reign here (and not explicitly personified), in Rom. 6.18-20, there is a transition: now Righteousness is personified as the master who rules over the believer.

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6 Hans Conzelmann, "ΧΑΡΙΣ," in *TDNT* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 375-376.

7 Cf. Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 242.

8 Neil Elliot, *Rhetoric of Romans* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1990), 232. Elliot sees Grace as a cosmic power in contrast to the powers of Sin and Death. In contrast, rather than a cosmic power itself, Moo says that Paul equates personified Grace as another way to talk about this attribute of God, [Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 350].

9 C.K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 115. Cf. Rom. 4.13.

10 Ibid., 118.

11 See Cranfield, *Romans*.

2. Righteousness Rules as Master (Rom. 6.18-20)

[18] ἐλευθερωθέντες δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἐδουλώθητε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ. [19] Ἀνθρώπινον λέγω διὰ τὴν ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκὸς ὑμῶν. ὥσπερ γὰρ παρεστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ ἀκαθαρσίᾳ καὶ τῇ ἀνομίᾳ εἰς τὴν ἀνομίαν, οὕτως νῦν παραστήσατε τὰ μέλη ὑμῶν δοῦλα τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ εἰς ἁγιασμόν. [20] ὅτε γὰρ δοῦλοι ἦτε τῆς ἁμαρτίας, ἐλεύθεροι ἦτε τῇ δικαιοσύνῃ.

Having been liberated from Sin, you became a slave to Righteousness. (I speak like a man because of the weakness of your flesh.) Just as you presented your members as slaves to Impurity and Lawlessness which leads to lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to Righteousness which leads to holiness. For when you were slaves to Sin, you were free in respect to Righteousness.

Having contrasted Sin with Grace, here Paul places Sin (Impurity and Lawlessness)[12] in contradistinction to Righteousness.[13] The believers are no longer under the reign of Sin: now they are slaves to Righteousness. Paul restates v. 13 where he commanded the believers to present themselves to God and Righteousness;[14] however here, Paul focuses on personified Righteousness alone.[15] (We shall propose a purpose for this below.) Rather than an image with military connotations where Sin and Righteousness wield weapons, now Paul refers back to the slavery metaphor began in v. 16.[16] In other words, Sin and Righteousness are equated more here to slave owners than to world rulers.[17]

The imagery of Sin and Righteousness as slave masters would evoke the widely understood reality of slavery in the Greco-Roman world, especially the

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12 Paul employs various nouns in his contrast of the evil life with the good life.
Sin ←→ God vv. 10, 13
Sin ←→ Obedience v. 16
Sin ← → Righteousness v. 18
Impurity/Lawlessness ←→Righteousness v. 19
Sin ←→ Righteousness v. 20
Sin ←→ God vv. 22-23

13 See Pr. 13.6 where the author contrasts sin and righteousness. There (s)in destroys the ungodly, just as Righteousness preserves the pure, so also Sin overturns, סָלַף or makes the unrighteous evil (τοὺς δὲ ἀσεβεῖς φαύλους ποιεῖ ἁμαρτία). Cf. Prov. 14.34; Ps Sol. 15.11.

14 The believers should submit not only their limbs, but "every part that goes into making up their person" [Morris, *Romans*, 265].

15 See Dunn who argues that personified Righteousness is "in effect synonymous with God," [Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 345].

16 Jewett, *Romans*, 411. Sin and Righteousness here may denote the object or purpose of the weapons instead, see Moo, *Romans*, 386.

17 See Edwards, who argues that Paul depicts the scene of two masters vying for control of individuals and bidding against the other as a slave auction [James R. Edwards, *Romans*, NIBC (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998), 172].

characteristic aspiration of a slave for freedom.[18] The idea of selling oneself into slavery would stress the finality of such a decision. For example, Jewett concludes:

> Once the step into slavery was made, there was legally no escape except for death or manumission at the discretion of the owner. The owner literally had power of life and death over his slaves; he could discipline them or execute them at will, with no legal jeopardy. They were simply his property, and whatever legal rights they may previously have enjoyed were eradicated.[19]

With the juxtaposition of Sin and Righteousness, Paul demonstrates further the consequences of the believers' choice to live under Sin or Righteousness. Whereas the reign of Sin results in Death in 5.21, submission to her here produces lawlessness. Furthermore, whereas the reign of Grace leads to eternal life, here, submission to Righteousness results in holiness.[20] Paul's personification of Dikaiosyne presents righteousness as more than right conduct but as a force that exercises authority over the believer.[21]

In order to show the great divide between Sin and Righteousness, Paul engages in word play. For example, in v. 19, he uses an aorist active indicative verb (παρεστήσατε) to describe their life in the past and then uses the same verb as an aorist active imperative, which shares the same form as the indicative (παρεστήσατε). Moreover, in v. 20, Paul restates v. 18. In the latter, the believer has been set free from Sin to be a slave to Righteousness. But in v. 20, Paul states that when the believers were slaves to Sin, they were free from the reign of Righteousness.

Since a person cannot have two masters,[22] when the believers were under Sin, Righteousness was not their lord, and now that Dikaiosyne is their Lord, Sin should not be. Wilckens correctly concludes:

> Sünde und Gerechtigkeit sind eben nicht zwei Herren auf der gleichen Ebene, wie es das Bild voraussetz; sondern sie stehen sich im Verhältnis der Überlegenheit das einen Herrn gegenüber dem anderen einander gegenüber.[23]

Therefore, the Christian should be enslaved to the greater master, Righteousness. The aorist tense here points to wholehearted commitment,[24] to

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18 Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 344. According to Dunn, however, sacral manumission is not the likely depiction that Paul seeks to evoke.

19 Jewett, *Romans*, 416. See also Morris, *Romans*, 260-261.

20 "Rather striking is that the antithesis to "lawlessness" is not obedience to the law," but Righteousness as determined by Grace rather than as governed by Law, [Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 355].

21 Moo, *Romans*, 403.

22 Matt. 6.24. On the other hand, a person will have one master for "Der Mensch ist in Wirklichkeit nie autonom," [Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, vol. 2 (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), 39].

23 Ibid., 38.

24 Morris, *Romans*, 265.

"totale Sklaverei."[25] In other words, since the believers wholly presented their bodies to Sin in the past, now Paul commands them to present their bodies entirely to Righteousness instead.

If we look at the personifications of Grace and Righteousness together, we see that there is a development from grace and righteousness as gifts through which the believers will reign (5.17) to Grace as the one who will reign through righteousness (5.21). Here, Righteousness is more than a gift to the believers by which they shall reign in life, she is a slave-master to whom the believers are bound for the sake of life. Moreover, in light of our previous discussions of personified Sin, Death and the Law, the differences between these personifications and Righteousness are stressed. The Law increases trespass, but Dikaiosyne results in holiness. So also, Sin brings Death, while Righteousness leads to eternal life. Paul personifies Righteousness one last time in Romans. However, rather than a slave master, the development continues so that Righteousness actually speaks. In fact, she stands up as Paul's witness to reinterpret the OT.

3. The Voice of Righteousness (Rom. 10.5-8)

[5] Μωϋσῆς γὰρ γράφει τὴν δικαιοσύνην τὴν ἐκ [τοῦ νόμου ὅτι ὁ ποιήσας αὐτὰ ἄνθρωπος ζήσεται ἐν αὐτοῖς.
[6] ἡ δὲ ἐκ πίστεως Δικαιοσύνη οὕτως λέγει· μὴ εἴπῃς ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου· τίς ἀναβήσεται εἰς τὸν οὐρανόν; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν καταγαγεῖν·
[7] ἤ, τίς καταβήσεται εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον; τοῦτ' ἔστιν Χριστὸν ἐκ νεκρῶν ἀναγαγεῖν
[8] ἀλλὰ τί λέγει; ἐγγύς σου τὸ ῥῆμά ἐστιν ἐν τῷ στόματί σου καὶ ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ σου, τοῦτ' ἔστιν τὸ ῥῆμα τῆς πίστεως ὃ κηρύσσομεν.

For Moses writes about righteousness from the Law, that the one doing these laws shall live by them. However, Righteousness by Faith says: "Do not say in your hearts, 'Who shall ascend into the heavens,' this is to bring Christ down; neither say, 'Who shall descend into the abyss,' this is to bring Christ up from the dead" But what does Righteousness by faith say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart"—this is the word of faith which we proclaim.

In the previous accounts, Paul has personified Nomos in discussions regarding the great divide between works of the Law and the gospel of grace. In Romans 9-11, Paul personifies Righteousness in a conversation concerning God's faithfulness and the salvation of Israel.[26] Although the focus of the argument has shifted, the contrast between the pursuit for salvation through the Law with salvation achieved by faith persists. In Paul's eyes, the vast majority of Jews were still living under the old way of the Law, resulting in wrath, trespass and death.

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25 Wilckens, *Römer*, 38.

26 'Has the word of God failed Israel?' (9.6), 'Why has not Israel found righteousness?'(10.1-13), "Has God rejected them?" (11.1). For how Romans 9-11 flows out of 9.6, see Otfried Hofius, "Das Evangelium und Israel. Erwägungen zu Röm 9-11," *ZThK* 83 (1986), 300-310.

Yet when writing about the general situation of the Jewish people, Paul begins on a positive note,[27] by admitting that his people have a zeal[28] for God and that they even pursue the Law of righteousness.[29] However, Paul declares with regret that this zeal is without knowledge and their pursuit is not according to faith. Even though their mistake comes from "ignorant sin," they are still guilty of sin; Israel is at fault for pursuing righteousness in the wrong way, and hence for not attaining to it.[30]

Furthermore, "it was not only the manner of Israel's pursuit…that was misguided; her very choice of a goal was wrong" as well.[31] Due to their zeal, the non-Christian Jews sought to establish their own righteousness,[32] and probably thought they had succeeded.[33] By focusing on the Law rather than its τέλος, however, the unbelieving Jews had paradoxically[34] committed "spiritual apostasy."[35] Therefore, despite their misdirected desire and their self-righteous pursuit, the fact remains for Paul—the unbelieving Jews are not subject to the righteousness of God. So, similar to the rhetorical strategy in Rom. 3.19, Paul gives voice to a personification to reject Torah as the means of righteousness.

Although many have discussed this passage, the role of the personification of Dikaiosyne has been largely neglected or simply shrugged off as just a

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27 Moo, *Romans,* 632.

28 Wilckens, *Römer*, 219-221, demonstrates the extent of this zeal by defining it as a "kompromisslos-eindeutige" Engagement; he goes on to argue that such zeal for God is a zeal for the Law as seen in the lives of Phineas (Num. 25.11,13), Elijah (1Kings 19.10, 14) and Paul himself (Phil. 3.5f; Gal 1.14). For Paul as the "prime example" of this zeal see Peter Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans*, trans. Scott J. Hafemann (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1994), 154-155. Wilckens concludes that the basis of this zeal is in their conviction in the "vorchristlichen Bedingungen der Rechtfertigung durch das Tun des Gesetz," seeing God in the Law rather than in Christ (p. 220). Cf. Black, *Romans*, 138, who qualifies this zeal as "blind devotion and unenlightened *Schwärmerei*."

29 For a discussion on the different interpretations of νόμον δικαιοσύνης see Moo, *Romans,* 622-627.

30 N.T. Wright, *The Climax of the Covenant*, 3rd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993), 241, 244.

31 Moo, *Romans*, 627; cf. Lloyd Gaston, "Israel's Misstep in the Eyes of Paul," in *The Romans Debate*, ed. Karl P. Donfried (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1991), 316; and Cranfield, *Romans*, 508.

32 Cf. Wis. 2.11 where the sage places the term "Law of righteousness" in the mouth of the ungodly who seek to allow their own power to govern as opposed to the convictions of the godly. Moo, without expressing a reason, disregards this connexion and Dunn only references it as a parallel.

33 See Gathercole, *Where is Boasting?*, 210-211.

34 Cranfield explains this paradox in saying, "There is a perverse and obstinate ignorance at the very heart of their knowledge, and in the centre of their dedicated and meticulous obedience an obstinate disobedience" [Cranfield, *Romans,* 514].

35 Gathercole, *Where is Boasting?*, 208-209.

"lively and picturesque way" of quoting the OT,[36] so that by personifying Dikaiosyne, Paul simply "follows the biblical pattern of personifying activities and concepts that are closely related to God."[37] One should note, however, that Paul's personification is peculiar in at least two ways. First, although these other OT personified concepts are related to God, they do not quote scripture. Second, these personified concepts in the OT are not set over against a man of God[38] or for that matter against another scripture.

The closest parallel is the role of Righteousness in Ps. (84) 85.10-13. There, salvation (σωτήριον) is near (ἐγγύς) and Righteousness (δικαιοσύνη) kisses Peace. Truth rises up (ἀνέτειλεν), and Righteousness stoops down (διέκυψεν) and goes before the Lord preparing the way.[39] The common idea of salvation being near and the concept of rising and coming down combined with the personification of Righteousness are striking and (as far as we have seen) have not fully been discussed in regard to its relationship in Romans.

There is a question as to whether the voice of Dikaiosyne contravenes or complements that which was written by Moses.[40] There are a number of contrasts in 10.5-9.[41] On the one side, there is Moses and the Law, on the other, Righteousness and faith.[42] Doing is set in contrast to believing; and whereas Moses "demands action understood as achievement," Dikaiosyne "demands reception of the word."[43] Moreover, Moses may write, but Dikaiosyne speaks.[44] These contrasts point to the voice of Dikaiosyne as that

36 C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, ICC, vol. 2 (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1986), 522.

37 Moo, *Romans*, 650. He cites Prov. 8.21ff; Isa. 45.8-9, 55.10-11; Ps. 85.10-13.

38 E.g. Moses.

39 It literally says: "He shall set a path for his steps—δικαιοσύνη ἐναντίον αὐτοῦ προπορεύσεται καὶ θήσει εἰς ὁδὸν τὰ διαβήματα αὐτου.

40 For a detailed discussion of this debate, see A. Andrew Das, *Paul, the Law, and the Covenant* (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 2001), 262.

41 For an example of an argument that v. 6 complements v. 5 see Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (London: Yale University Press, 1989), 76-77. Against Hays, see Watson who states: "There is here a genuine antithesis: the distinction between these two texts (as understood by Paul) should not be downplayed" [Francis Watson, *Paul and the Hermeneutics of Faith* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark 2004), 331]. Cf. James D. G. Dunn, "'Righteousness from the Law' and 'Righteousness from Faith': Paul's Interpretation of Scripture in Romans 10:1-10," in *Tradition and Interpretation in the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 216-226.

42 See Steven Richard Bechtler, "Christ, the Telos of the Law: The Goal of Romans 10:4," *CBQ* 56 (1994), 305, who argues that one side focuses on human agency—life achieved by obeying the Law, the other on divine agency—God's work in Christ.

43 Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, English Translation ed. (London: SCM Press, 1980), 284.

44 Here, both citations are in the present tense, Moses writes and Dikaiosyne speaks so that both categories are contemporary realities—that is, one can live under what Moses says or what Dikaiosyne proclaims (cf. 2 Cor. 3.3-18).

which stands over against the words of Moses rather than as that which supports them. Again, we shall discuss the reason for this below.[45]

4. The Purposes for the Personifications of Grace and Righteousness

Although Paul has the concrete person of Jesus Christ as God's agent, he still resorts to the personifications of Grace and Righteousness in his references to the gospel. However, even when Paul does personify Grace in 5.21, he quickly qualifies that it is the Lord Jesus Christ who ultimately reigns. Moreover, Paul only briefly substitutes Righteousness for God as a master in juxtaposition to Sin in Romans 6. Why, then, does Paul employ these personifications at all?

To stress the importance of grace and righteousness

As we saw in chapter 2, Webster proposes that one purpose of personification is to persuade the reader of the importance of the image personified.[46] In Romans, the importance of Grace and Righteousness is underlined not only by their personification but also by the opposing personifications of Sin and Law. For example, Paul probably personifies Grace whose importance, for him, is that it stands opposite the Law just personified in the previous verse. The triad of the old age (Sin, Death and the Law) are set in contradistinction to that of the new (Righteousness, Life and Grace). Whereas Nomos increased trespass and Sin reigns with Death, so Grace reigns through righteousness resulting in eternal life.

So also, in contrast to Sin and its lawlessness, the personification of Righteousness stresses the importance of the ethical responsibility of the Christian. In other words, rather than a life of sin, impurity and lawlessness, the depiction of Righteousness as a master to be served highlights the necessity of the believers to act righteously and be holy.

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45 Cf. also M. Jack Suggs, "The Word is Near You: Rom 10.6-10 within the Purpose of the Letter," in *Christian History and Interpretation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), 304-308, who argues that Paul's formulation reflects Sophia in Sir. 24.5 and Bar. 3.29-30. So also Hays believes that "Echoing Job, Baruch, and Sirach, Paul hints at the notion that the word of God spoken in the Law is identical with the Wisdom of God…not as Torah, as Israel's sages affirmed, but in the person of Jesus Messiah," [Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 82].

46 See the purposes for personification in T.B.L. Webster, "Personification as a Mode of Greek Thought," *JWCI* 17 (1954), 10-21.

To explain righteousness and motivate the audience to pursue it

As we said above, in 6.19 Paul actually provides one reason why he uses personification: it is because of the weakness of the Roman Christians. In chapter 8, we proposed that weakness here refers both to ignorance and a lack of will power before temptation. Therefore, by depicting Sin as a slave-master, Paul hopes to motivate his audience to avoid a life of sin. This explains one reason why Paul personifies Sin as a slave master; but why does he present Righteousness as a slave owner as well?

According to Cranfield, v. 19 actually serves as an apology for the image of Righteousness as a slave lord because Paul realises that the figure is inappropriate "in almost every respect."[47] Indeed, the image of Christian slavery to God "does not bear the same marks of degradation, fear, and confinement that were typical of secular slavery."[48]

Cranfield goes on to say that despite the insufficiencies of the image Paul remains with it because no other depictions "so clearly express the total belongingness, the total obligation, the total commitment, and the total accountability, which characterize the life under grace."[49]

In addition to this, however, once we look at the personification of Sin as a foil to that of Righteousness, we find the personifications serve as an appeal as well as an explanation. That is to say, just as Paul used the personification of Sin as a tool to persuade the audience to avoid sin, so here he uses personified Righteousness as an instrument to motivate the audience to live holy lives by serving their new and worthy master. Therefore, with the personifications Paul presents two paths of life and thereby calls the audience not only to forsake the old road of sin but now to walk the new way of righteousness instead.

To appeal to authority

As we saw in chapter 9, Paul gives voice to personified Law as an appeal to authority. There, Paul allowed Nomos to speak to say that all human beings are condemned without the gospel. Similarly, in 10.6, Paul appeals to the authority of scripture by giving voice to Dikaiosyne. However, whereas the Law spoke to condemn humanity, Righteousness speaks to show the way to salvation.

Rather than just citing scripture, then, Paul has Righteousness quote scripture and even manipulate the original text so that "its latent sense is

47 Cranfield, *Romans*, 325.
48 Moo, *Romans*, 404
49 Cranfield, *Romans*, 326.

alleged to be identical with the manifest claims of his own proclamation."[50] Such is the nature of Paul's appeal to authority that to reject his gospel is to disagree with Righteousness herself who correctly interprets scripture and proclaims truth.

Conclusion

Whereas the personifications of Sin, Death and Law serve to explain the presence of evil, the personifications of Grace and Righteousness highlight God's solution to it. We have seen in the chapter that the concepts of grace and righteousness develop from that associated with the future reign of Christians to personifications which reign over the believers in contrast to Sin, Death and the Law. Righteousness even speaks; although scholars have not tended to compare the voice of Nomos in 3.19 with Dikaiosyne in 10.5-8, our investigation demonstrates the similarities. The former speaks to condemn humanity, the latter to save it. In a sense then, Nomos says that he is not the way to salvation and Righteousness agrees.

Therefore, like Nomos, the personification of Dikaiosyne serves as an appeal to authority in support of Paul's very unpopular implication that the Law is impotent to save. Furthermore, the personifications of Grace and Righteousness underline the potency of God's grace over Sin and the seriousness of the believers' requirement to be wholly committed to ethical behaviour.

50 Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, 82-83. "Although it appears that the quoting author is momentarily stepping aside and letting the source speak for itself, the author's act of selecting and embedding a quotation into a new rhetorical context actually amounts to a substantial deconstruction and reconstruction of the original text," [Christopher D. Stanley, *Arguing with Scripture* (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 34].

Chapter 11

The Personification of Creation and the Power of the Spirit

Introduction

In the past three chapters, we have seen how Paul personifies Sin and Death to distance God from the origin of evil by contrasting God's work of redemption with the entrance of Sin and Death. Paul insists that salvation from Sin and Death comes through Grace rather than Law. Therefore, to distance the Law from God's work of salvation, Paul personifies Nomos as that which speaks to condemn human beings, as that which entered to increase trespass, and as that which rules over unredeemed humanity. Rather than under the rule of Sin and Law, believers live under the reign of Grace. Now, they are enslaved to Righteousness, who unlike the Law, quotes scripture to reveal to people the way of salvation from Sin rather than to convict them in it.

By using the personifications of Sin and Death, Paul treats the problem of the origin of evil. By personifying Nomos, he answers why God's Law did not deliver people from Sin and Death. With the personifications of Grace and Righteousness, Paul stresses God's ultimate solution to the entrance of Sin and Death and his alternative to the Law. There is yet another issue that Paul must discuss however. If Christians are no longer under the reign of Sin, Death and the Law, but under the regime of Grace and Righteousness, then why do they still suffer? Therefore, "Paul's purpose in 8.18-39 is to legitimate the sufferings of his readers."[1]

To deal with this dilemma, Paul resorts once again to personification. Personified Creation suffers with these believers. The entrance of Sin and Death into the world affected not only the earth's inhabitants but the World as well. Paul promises that God will save humanity from affliction; however, he explains that this salvation is not reserved for humanity alone. With Paul's references to creation (κτίσις[2] and κόσμος[3]), he demonstrates that this salvation

1 Edward Adams, *Constructing the World* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 183.

2 Paul's employment of κτίσις is limited. Outside of Rom. 8.15-25, he uses κτίσις to refer to the Creation of the world (Rom. 1.20), to creatures (Rom. 1.25; Rom. 8.39), and to the Christian as a καινὴ κτίσις (2 Cor. 5.17; Gal. 6.15; cf. Col. 1.15, 23). For the linguistic background of κτίσις, see ibid., 77-80.

"is not simply anthropocentric but includes within its scope the whole of the physical creation,"[4] whose redemption "lies in its being recaptured for the sovereignty of God."[5]

For Paul, then, the righteousness of God is manifest not only in God's work in Christ to reconcile and redeem humanity but also in his promise to restore his Creation to glory. Therefore, God's future act of glorification should not be seen as for humanity alone, but for all creation,[6] for "salvation consists not so much in the rescue of human beings from a sinking ship, but in the recovery of the wayward vessel itself."[7] This theme is so important that it has even been said that Romans is a "creation history" rather than a *Heilgeschichte*.[8] Yet until the day in this history when Creation is saved, she suffers with the believers.

Also within this discussion of Christian suffering, Paul speaks of the Spirit as that which comes to the aid of believers and prays for them in affliction. Although we are inclined to see the Holy Spirit as a divine person,[9] from a literary perspective, it is possible to see "spirit" as a personification of an abstract concept that has been given personal aspects and placed as the subject of verbs most often associated with humans. In 8.26-27, Paul expands his thoughts on the Spirit from 5.5 and 8.23, both of which occur in the context of Christian suffering. In the former verse, the Holy Spirit is a guarantee that their hope in the face of suffering will not fail. In the latter, we see that not only do

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3 More common is Paul's use of cosmos. Within Romans, Paul uses these words simultaneously (ibid., 79). For an in depth study on the historical and linguistic background of κόσμος, see ibid., 41-77.

4 Bruce W. Longenecker, *The Triumph of Abraham's God* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 42. See also Paul J. Achtemeier, *Romans* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985), 13 where he even suggests the first eleven chapters can be seen as the history between God and his Creation, the world and man. See also Adams, *Constructing the World*, 152: "The sweep of God's purposes in the course of salvation history is encompassed within an all-embracing purpose for creation (11:36)."

5 Ernst Käsemann, *New Testament Questions of Today* (London: SCM Press, 1969), 182.

6 For more on this see Michael Bird, *The Saving Righteousness of God* (Carlisle, UK: Paternoster, 2006), 36-39; Käsemann, *Questions*, 178-180; Peter Stuhlmacher, *Revisiting Paul's Doctrine of Justification* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2001), 73; Terence L. Donaldson, *Paul and the Gentiles* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1997), 95-96; William J. Dumbrell, *Romans* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2005), 22; J. Louis Martyn, "Epilogue: An Essay in Pauline Meta-Ethics," in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and his Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 183.

7 Adams, *Constructing the World*, 190.

8 Edward Adams, "Paul's Story of God and Creation," in *Narrative Dynamics in Paul*, ed. Bruce W. Longenecker (London: John Knox Press, 2002), 37-38.

9 We agree with Longenecker: "Although it would be anachronistic to read Paul in the light of later 'Trinitarian" formulations and creeds of the Early Church, it is nonetheless true that Paul envisages the sovereign divinity who is one in terms of three interrelated figures," [Longenecker, *Triumph*, 61].

believers have a future hope in the face of affliction, but they also have the Spirit of God in the midst of it.[10]

Therefore, we shall now investigate the personification of Creation in Rom. 8.15-25 (1) and then Paul's discussion of the Holy Spirit (2). Once this has been accomplished, we shall investigate the functions for the personification of Creation and the mention of the Spirit (3). We will propose that the depiction of Creation in pain serves as an appeal to sympathy, as an avenue to associate the Christian with Creation, and as a way to remove some of the attention of current suffering off of the saints by stressing the condition of the World. Furthermore, by focusing on Creation's suffering and hope, Paul defers the solution to the problem of righteous suffering to the future. So also, the promise of the Spirit's aid in suffering would serve to encourage the saints that God has not forsaken them in their hardships.

Moreover, it will be argued that, in contrast to most scholars who simply associate Paul's personification of Creation with those of nature in the OT, Paul's personification of Creation goes against those of the Earth in the OT (1.1). In the former, Creation groans for liberation at the *eschaton*; in the latter, Earth groans because she will be destroyed on the day of the Lord. The peculiarities of Paul's personification do not end here, as a comparison of it with viewpoints about Creation in Philo (1.2), in the Imperial Cult (1.3), in the Gospels (1.4) and even in Galatians (1.5) will demonstrate.

1. The Personification of Creation (Rom. 8.18-23)

[18] Λογίζομαι γὰρ ὅτι οὐκ ἄξια τὰ παθήματα τοῦ
νῦν καιροῦ πρὸς τὴν μέλλουσαν δόξαν
ἀποκαλυφθῆναι εἰς ἡμᾶς.
[19] ἡ γὰρ ἀποκαραδοκία τῆς Κτίσεως τὴν
ἀποκάλυψιν τῶν υἱῶν τοῦ θεοῦ ἀπεκδέχεται.
[20] τῇ γὰρ ματαιότητι ἡ Κτίσις ὑπετάγη, οὐχ
ἑκοῦσα ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸν ὑποτάξαντα, ἐφ' ἐλπίδι [21]
ὅτι καὶ αὐτὴ ἡ Κτίσις ἐλευθερωθήσεται ἀπὸ
τῆς δουλείας τῆς φθορᾶς εἰς τὴν ἐλευθερίαν
τῆς δόξης τῶν τέκνων τοῦ θεοῦ. [22] οἴδαμεν γὰρ
ὅτι πᾶσα ἡ Κτίσις συστενάζει καὶ συνωδίνει
ἄχρι τοῦ νῦν· [23] οὐ μόνον δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτοὶ
τὴν ἀπαρχὴν τοῦ πνεύματος ἔχοντες, ἡμεῖς καὶ
αὐτοὶ ἐν ἑαυτοῖς στενάζομεν υἱοθεσίαν
ἀπεκδεχόμενοι, τὴν ἀπολύτρωσιν τοῦ σώματος
ἡμῶν.

For we consider that the present sufferings are not worthy to compare with the coming glory to be revealed in us. For the eager longing of Creation anxiously waits for the revelation of the children of God. For unwillingly Creation was subjected to futility by the one subjecting her in hope, for even Creation herself will be liberated from the bondage of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God. For we know that all Creation groans and suffers birth pangs until now. But not only Creation, but also we ourselves, those who have the first portion of the Spirit, inwardly groan while we eagerly await adoption, that is, the redemption of our bodies.

The theme of creation occurs throughout Romans. In 1.20, the apostle announces that since the creation of the cosmos (ἀπὸ κτίσεως κόσμου), God's

10 This seems to be the impression ὡσαύτως is intended to give, see Moo, *Romans*, 523.

attributes have been made clearly visible. In Rom. 4.13, Paul declares that Abraham's descendents will inherit the world (κόσμου); this promise foreshadows the liberated Κτίσις in 8.21.[11] Whereas 4.13 serves as a foreshadow of the discussion of Creation in Rom. 8.18-23, so 5.12, where Sin and Death entered into the cosmos, serves to explain the condition of Creation in 8.18-23.[12] Therefore in Romans 8, Paul unpacks his previous statements about creation with a personification of it. [13] According to Paul, non-human[14] Creation had to suffer in order to share in the glory of the children of God, just as the divine sons and daughters had to suffer in order to share in the glory of the Son of God.[15]

According to the apostle, Creation is a slave, who stretches out her neck (ἀποκαραδοκία)[16] in anticipation (ἀπεκδέχεται)[17] of redemption at the apocalypse.[18] Creation has a will[19] as well as a hope.[20] Having been subjected

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11 'At least on one level, 8.18-23 explicates 4.13,' [Adams, *Constructing the World*, 171].

12 See also Gal. 6.14-15.

13 Moreover, "Romans 8.20-21 anticipates 11.32, which is the climax of Romans 1-11…God shut all under disobedience so he could show mercy to all (11.32), a principle extended in Rom. 8.20-21 to the entire creation," [Harry Alan Hahne, *The Corruption and Redemption of Creation* (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 193].

14 According to Wilckens it is "der gesamten aussermenschlichen Schöpfung," (p. 153). That this is the case is a growing consensus among scholars, see Adams, *Constructing the World*, 19,176; Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley, English Translation ed. (London: SCM Press, 1980), 233; and C.E.B. Cranfield, "Some Observations of Romans 8:19-21," in *Reconciliation and Hope*, ed. Robert Banks (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 226.

15 Cf. 4 Ezra 7.11-16. The parallel of 4 Ezra 7.11-16 to Rom. 8.18-25 is more striking than Moo admits [Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 514 fn 34].

16 This is the idea of ἀποκαραδοκία here: "καρα is a poetical synonym for κεφαλη," [C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 10th ed., ICC, vol. I (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001), 410]. Moo cites Phillips's paraphrase to capture the essence: "Creation is on tiptoe," [Moo, *Romans*, 513]. The phrase ἀποκαραδοκία τῆς κτίσεως is a figure of speech meant to bring out the intensity of Creation's longing [Otto Kuss, *Der Römerbrief* (Regensburg: Pustet, 1963), 625]. Paul also stresses it by placing the grammatical subject (eager anticipation) in the place of the real subject, Creation [Moo, *Romans*, 513].

17 ἀπεκδέχομαι is used rarely outside of Paul and almost always with people as its subject (e.g. Josephus, *Bel. Jud* § 264; Polybius, 16, 2, 8; 18, 48, 4). This is the case with ἐκδέχομαι as well (e.g. Gen. 43.9; 3 Macc. 3.22; 1 Cor. 11.33), but it can refer to the Lord (Ps 118.122 [119.122], Sir. 18.14). More specifically, aside from this verse, Paul always uses it with Christians eagerly awaiting the exaltation, revelation and hope of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 1.7; Gal. 5.5; Phil. 3.20). Cf. Phil. 1.20; Heb. 9.20; 1 Pet. 3.20. The closest OT parallel is in Mic. 2.12 where God promises to those anxiously awaiting (ἐκδεχόμενος ἐκδέξομαι) that the remnant will be returned from exile. Cf. Hos. 8.7 and Hos. 9.6.

18 Kuss, *Der Römerbrief*, 625.

19 Although the Greek does not supply the word "will," this is the idea of the phrase: "οὐχ ἑκοῦσα."

20 The ἐλπίς referred to here is Creation's redemption from the curse when the Christian receives the redemption of her body as well.

to futility (ματαιότης)[21] against her will (οὐχ ἑκοῦσα),[22] Creation groans (συστενάζει)[23] and suffers in the throes of birth pangs (συνωδίνει).[24] Creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the children of God, since she has been subjected to futility. In other words, the World groans because of her current state on the one hand and for her imminent liberation from it on the other. Whereas in v. 20 Paul expresses this negative aspect about Creation, in v. 21 he discusses the positive side of it: she has the hope of liberation from corruption (φθορά)[25] at the time when the children of God will be set free.[26]

Paul continues: like Creation, those having been saved in hope continue to groan as they also eagerly await the redemption of their bodies from corruption. Just as the fate of the children of God is tied to the fate of his Son, so also, the fate of Creation is tied to the fate of the Christian. While Creation was subjected to futility in hope, the children of God were saved in hope.[27] Hence, like Creation, the believer must anxiously await this apocalypse in hope and with perseverance.[28]

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21 For the different interpretations of "futility," see Hahne, *Creation*, 189-191.

22 οὐχ ἑκοῦσα demonstrates that Creation "was not party to Adam's failure but was drawn into it nonetheless," [James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 470]. ἑκών rarely occurs in the Old or New Testament; when it does occur it often connotes willingness or deliberation (e.g. Job 36.19; 1 Cor. 9.17). Cf. Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* 1230 and Plato, *Prot.* 345d.

23 The συν- prefix implies "suffering together with"; this is most likely a reference to all of its parts suffering together rather than suffering with Adam or Christ [Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 323 fn. 97]. στενάζω is used of the son of man in Ezek. 21.6 (11); there, God commands the prophet to groan in pain (ἐν ὀδύναις στενάξεις) before Israel due to imminent wrath upon the city. In 1 Macc. 1.26, the rulers and elders of Jerusalem groan in the wake of Antiochus' plundering of the temple. Cf. 4 Macc. 9.21; Sir. 30.20; Wis. 5.3 and 1 Enoch 62.4.

24 In Jewish scriptures, ὠδίνω is often used as a simile to refer to groaning of the wicked (e.g. Ps. 7.15, Jer. 30.16 [49.22], Sir. 19.11). In the LXX, Hab. 3.10 presents the peoples groaning instead of the mountains in the MT—cf. 1 Enoch 62.4. It is often used in reference to the Jews (Isa. 26.17-18; Sir. 48.19; 4 Macc. 15.16; cf. 1 QH 5.30-32). Paul only uses the verb in reference to Christians, specifically himself (Gal. 4.19).

25 C.K. Barrett sees a possible personification of φθορά and argues that Paul's use of φθορά points to a "bondage to corrupt powers," [C.K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 166]. See also C.K. Barrett, *From Adam to Last: A Study in Pauline Theology* (London: Adam & Charles Black, 1962), 17-19 and Adams, "Paul's Story," 29.

26 Ulrich Wilckens, *Der Brief an die Römer*, vol. 2 (Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1978), 154.

27 This could also be translated "by hope" (instrumental) or "for hope" (dative) rather than locative [see Daniel B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 140]. For why one should prefer the locative ("in hope"), see Morris, *Romans*, 324.

28 Morris, *Romans*, 325. Cf. J. Christiaan Beker, "Suffering and Triumph in Paul's Letter to the Romans," *HBT* 7, no. 2 (1985), 108.

Although Paul does not explicitly mention the passage, most commentators[29] cite Genesis 3 as the background for the subjection of Creation,[30] which implies that she was subjected to futility during the fall of Adam. Just as the apostle argued that Sin and Death entered into the cosmos through Adam in Rom. 5.12, so here he argues, in light of Gen. 3.17, that Creation was cursed through Adam's sin. Since in Gen. 3.15-18, God is the one cursing Earth in response to Adam's disobedience,[31] one should take the verb ὑποτάσσω here in v. 20 as a divine passive,[32] which points to God as the one who subjected Creation in response to Sin and in hope of its resolution.

However, despite the Genesis 3 background, Paul is not simply recapitulating a tradition here.[33] Adams correctly infers that the term λογίζομαι suggests that Paul is consciously reworking and reconfiguring "established apocalyptic themes in a creative and distinctive way."[34] One example of this distinctiveness is the personification of Creation. We shall now argue that

29 There are two primary exceptions. 1) Ralph Martin proposes that it was the devil's "primeval disobedience and rebellion that dragged down the whole Creation," [Ralph P. Martin, *Reconciliation* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1981), 53]. 2) There is the proposed background of the flood tradition by Olle Christoffersson, *The Earnest Expectation of the Creature: The Flood-Tradition as Matrix of Romans 8:18-27* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1990), which has not been convincing (e.g. Hahne, *Creation*, 188; B.R. Gaventa, "Review of The Earnest Expectation of the Creature," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 54 (1992), 146; Markus Bockmuehl, "Review of 'The Earnest Expectation of the Creature'," *JTS*, no. 42 (1991), 254 and Moo, *Romans*, 514 fn. 34.

30 E.g. Leander E. Keck, *Romans*; Kuss, *Der Römerbrief*; Adams, *Constructing the World*; Brendan Byrne, *Romans*; Haacker, *Römer*; Stuhlmacher, *Romans*; Ziesler, *Romans*; et. al. For the argument that Paul has a *protoeuangelion* in mind in this exposition of the *hope* of Creation's subjection, see Cranfield, "Observations," 228 and Hahne, *Creation*, 192. Tsumura even goes so far as to say that Creation's birth pangs allude to Eve's punishment in Gen. 3.17, [D.T. Tsumura, "An OT Background to Rom 8:22," *NTS* 40 (1994), 620-621].

31 Although Adam and Satan have been suggested as alternative options, surely neither of them subjected Creation ἐφ' ἐλπίδι; see Kuss, *Der Römerbrief*, 634.

32 Matthew Black, *Romans*; Cranfield, *Romans*; Käsemann, *Römer*; Morris, *Romans*; John Murray, *Romans*; Wilckens, *Römer*; et. al.

33 For example, while most scholars argue that Genesis 3 serves as the primary background, scholars have tended not to discuss the fact there is no mention of Creation groaning there. However, the first mention of the Earth in the context of groans in the OT is found in Gen. 4.10-12. After being cursed in Genesis 3, Earth opens her mouth to swallow Abel's blood, which cries out from her. She resists Cain by refusing to grant him her strength, the fruit of her body. This is in obedience to God's sentence in v. 12, which says that Cain shall tremble and groan (στένων), and immediately in vv. 13-14, Cain complains that he shall do just that (στένων). We find it striking that the very first actualisation of Earth and Sin, who was crouching at Cain's door, occurs in Genesis 4, the immediate chapter following Genesis 3, the background for Paul's personifications of Sin and Creation in Rom. 5.12 and 8.19-22. Here, however, since Sin conquered Cain, it is not Earth that is cursed but Cain who is cursed from the Earth. As Earth identifies with the unjust suffering of Abel in Genesis 4, so also does Creation identify with suffering believers as she cries out in Romans 8. Cf. Homer, *Iliad* IV.182; VIII.150.

34 Adams, *Constructing the World*, 181.

Paul's personification of Creation here is distinct from the personification of Nature, Earth, and the World in the OT (1.1), in Philo (1.2), in the Imperial Cult (1.3), in the Gospels (1.4) and even in his own writings (1.5).

1.1 The Personification of Earth in the OT

Some scholars briefly identify Paul's conception of Creation with the personification of the earth and the parts of nature in the OT in order to say that Paul merely employs a common personification. For example, Leon Morris states that the reader should not be surprised at the personification of Creation groaning since scripture contains passages of nature rejoicing.[35] There is quite a bit of difference, however, between parts of nature rejoicing and Creation groaning. Further, Cranfield cites John Chrysostom (PG, 60, col 529) in order to conclude that this is "an example of personification such as is quite often to be found in the Old Testament."[36]

Yet how similar is Paul's personification to these in the OT? The closest parallels are the prophets' depiction of the Earth groaning at the day of the Lord. Like Creation in Romans 8, the prophets personify Earth close to contexts with metaphors of birth pangs and to passages with the promise of a new heaven and earth. For example, in Isa. 24.4, Earth will mourn (ἐπένθησεν[37] ἡ γῆ) at the coming of the Lord, because it will be corrupted by him (ἐφθάρη ἡ οἰκουμένη), as he desolates, plunders and destroys it when he unveils her face and scatters her inhabitants.[38] Despite this terrifying notion, a promise remains that a new creation will replace the old one (Isa. 65.17; 66.22).

Likewise, Jeremiah records the Lord commanding Earth to mourn (πενθείτω ἡ γῆ) for he shall desolate it as part of his judgment on Israel.[39] The personification of Earth in Jer. 12.4 falls within the context of Jeremiah's struggle with the problem of evil, where in his complaint, he asks, "How long will the earth mourn (ἕως πότε πενθήσει ἡ γῆ) because of the evil of those dwelling within her." Furthermore, both Isaiah and Jeremiah go on to use the metaphor of agony in childbirth.[40]

35 Morris, *Romans*, 321.

36 Cranfield, "Observations," 225. For a comparison between Paul's personification of Creation with that of nature in Jewish apocalyptic writings, see Hahne, *Creation*, 219-221.

37 Futuristic aorist.

38 Isa. 24.1; cf. Isa. 13.13 where the heavens tremble and the earth shakes at the coming of the Lord.

39 Jer. 4.28.

40 In Isa. 26.17-18, the prophet speaks of Judah as a woman groaning in labour (ὡς ἡ ὠδίνουσα) who gives birth to the wind (cf. Isa. 66.8). Similarly, Jeremiah personifies Daughter Zion crying like a woman in labour (ὡς ὠδινούσης), with the groans (τοῦ στεναγμοῦ) of one bearing her first child (Jer. 4.31). Furthermore, Isa. 66.7 personifies Zion as a lactating mother whose glorious breasts nourish her inhabitants with the milk of comfort for she gave

The motif of groaning (στενάζω) and moaning (ὠδίνω) because of destruction occurs with other personifications as well. For example, in Jer. 38.19 (31.19), Ephraim, the personification of the tribe, groans over the day of his shame. Similarly, in Lam. 1.8, the personification of Jerusalem groans because she has been made an object of scorn, naked before those who once honoured her.[41] Likewise, in Mic. 4.10, the prophet commands Daughter Zion to cry out like a woman in labour due to their imminent exile to Babylon.[42] So also Jeremiah presents Daughter Zion as a woman giving birth to her first child, gasping for air, stretching out her arms, and complaining due to her destruction (4.31).

What scholars have tended to overlook is that Paul's personification is drastically different than those in the prophets: *Whereas in the prophets the Earth dreadfully groans at the coming judgment of Yahweh, in Romans Creation longingly groans for the coming redemption from the Lord.* As opposed to personified Earth and Zion, Paul's Creation does not groan because she will be corrupted or destroyed on the day of the Lord: she groans because she will then be set free from corruption. Moreover, whereas Jeremiah uses the personification to *question* God's faithfulness in the midst of suffering; Paul uses personification to *prove* God's faithfulness in the face of it.

1.2 The Personification of Creation in Philo

The idea of the Earth groaning also occurs outside of the OT. For example, Philo often speaks of Earth and Cosmos in reference to labour pangs. Considering foolish the idea that Earth has a womb that once produced men, Philo insists that Earth has not lost any of her original potency and has never suffered the pains of childbirth.[43] The reason people do not spring forth from her is that they never did. She has not lost any of her former strength, for if she ever had such strength as to birth humans she would continue to do so for the sake of women who give birth with πολλάκις ὠδῖσιν. [44] Elsewhere, however, Philo claims that Earth gives birth to all things after much labour and

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birth to a land (ὤδινεν γῆ) before she even experienced contractions (πρὶν ἐλθεῖν τὸν πόνον τῶν ὠδίνων). Cf. Isa. 23.4; Job 31.38.

41 See also 4 Esr. 9.38-10.24, where Mother Zion groans at the destruction of her children.

42 It is more along these lines that Paul uses the metaphor in 1 Thess. 5.3. Cf. Jn 16.21; I QH XI.7-13. Micah also emphasises both pain and deliverance; Daughter Zion is commanded to go through suffering like a woman in the travails of labour because, even though she must go to Babylon, she will be redeemed (4.10).

43 Philo, *Aet.* 65-66. Cf. 4 *Ezra* 5.50-55; 14.10-17; 2 *Baruch* 85.10.

44 Philo often uses ὠδίνω to refer to women in childbirth—of Hagar in *Fug.* 208; of Tamar in *Quod Deus* 137; of Sarah in *Ebr.* 60; and of Leah in *Post.* 135.

groaning.[45] Earth is not the only one whom Philo portrays as in the pangs of childbirth; he also depicts Lady Wisdom in labour as she gives birth to God's only beloved son, Cosmos.[46]. Philo's closest parallel to the personification of Creation in Romans is not his personification of Cosmos but of Understanding, who groans because it cannot obtain what it wishes (Philo, *Mig.* 155).

In contrast to Philo's personification of Earth, personified Creation in Romans has indeed lost her original nature and does experience birth pangs. She will not give birth to children, but she suffers with the children of God until they are revealed. Moreover, as opposed to Philo's Lady Wisdom who gives birth to God's son, Creation eagerly awaits the redemption of the divine children at the coming of God's only Son.

1.3 The Personification of Mother Earth in the Imperial Cult

Jewett suggests that Paul's personification of Creation as a groaning mother is a foil to the jubilation of Mother Earth in the Imperial Cult.[47] Even though (as we shall see below) we consider Paul's personification of Creation as a tool to encourage those in suffering rather than an attack on propaganda from the Imperial Cult,[48] Jewett has revealed many striking ways in which Creation in Romans stands over against Mother Earth in the cult of Rome. In the latter, Augustus had proclaimed that the birth of the new age had begun with his reign; and thus, Mother Earth had been restored from her corruption to her idyllic beginning.[49] With renewed glory, she now sat upon the altar of Augustan Peace and appeared on numerous coins and altars during the time of Augustus and his successors. [50]

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45 Op. Mund. 43.

46 Philo, *Ebr.* 30. He also uses ὠδίνω with ψυχή as its subject (*Mig.* 33 and *Post.* 13). Philo can utilise this verb in a personification with negative overtones. For instance, in *Agr.* 101, ἀκρασία travails and gives birth to passions (ὠδίνουσι καὶ τίκτουσιν ἡδοναί), and the ἄφρων νοῦς even though ἐν ὠδῖσι, οὐδέποτε τίκτει (*Leg. All.* I.XXIV.75-76). Cf. also *Conf.* 21, 26. Plato also relates the conception and labour of Gaia with that of women. He posits, however, it is not Gaia that is personified: it is the woman who imitates Mother Earth (*Menexenus,* 238a).

47 Robert Jewett, "The Corruption and Redemption of Creation: Reading Rom 8.18-23 within the Imperial Context," in *Paul and the Roman Imperial Order*, ed. Richard Horsley (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity International Press, 2004), 30-31.

48 Jewett posits that the presentation of Mother Earth within the imperial context serves as a foil for Paul as it differs from Rom. 8.18-23 at "virtually every point." While it is too sweeping to say this is the one foil for Paul, Jewett's argument does provide us with one example of how many of Paul's Roman readers might have interpreted the personification. One should not, however, discount all of the other Jewish and Greco-Roman parallels.

49 Such a premise was behind the organisation of the *Saecular* Games (17 B.C.E.), which were meant to celebrate Mother Earth's redemption (ibid.).

50 Ibid.

However, while both Mother Earth in the Imperial Cult and personified Creation in Romans occur within contexts of the World's corruption, in contrast to the Imperial Cult, Paul's Creation had *not* been liberated and restored at the revelation of Rome's king, nor is she on the side of victorious pagans.[51] Rather, according to Paul, she hopes and waits for the revelation of God's heirs at the coming of the true Caesar of the Cosmos, Jesus Christ.

1.4 Birth Pangs in the Gospels

Some scholars even associate Paul's personification of Creation to the idea in the NT that earthquakes and such are groans actually representing the birth pangs of Messianic woes (Matt. 24.4; Mark 13.8).[52] These pangs in Romans 8 do not represent messianic woes, however, since they go back all the way to the fall of Adam, not to the advent of the Christ.[53] As Jonathan Moo has argued,

> There is no reason to think that Paul alludes to events merely in the interim between the first and second comings of Christ or to signs immediately preceding the end of the age … there is not here, as in the 'messianic woes' tradition, any indication that creation's groaning is intensifying because of the approach of the end.[54]

Like Mark 13.8, however, these pangs and woes are full of hope and purpose, since they are the pangs of birth not death.[55]

1.5 The Crucifixion of Creation

The only other place Paul personifies Creation is in Gal. 6.14-15:

[14] Ἐμοὶ δὲ μὴ γένοιτο καυχᾶσθαι εἰ μὴ ἐν τῷ σταυρῷ τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ, δι' οὗ ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται κἀγὼ κόσμῳ. [15] οὔτε γὰρ περιτομή τί ἐστιν οὔτε ἀκροβυστία ἀλλὰ καινὴ κτίσις.	May I never boast in anything except the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which Cosmos has been crucified to me and I to Cosmos. For neither circumcision nor uncircumcision is anything but what matters is new Creation.

51 Ibid.

52 E.g. Matthew Black, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1973), 116; Cranfield, *Romans*, 416; and Käsemann, *Romans*, 232. Cf. Hahne, *Creation*, 204-206.

53 See Adams, *Constructing the World*, 179.

54 Jonathan Moo, "Romans 8.19-22 and Isaiah's Cosmic Covenant," *NTS* 54 (2008), pp. 74-98.

55 Morris, *Romans*, 323. Cf. Kuss who contrasts Paul's view of Creation to that of Jesus, who does not present Creation in agony but without anxiety, due to the provision of God [Kuss, *Der Römerbrief*, 630]. Against Kuss, however, one should not forget Mark 13.8 which discusses eschatology.

Here Paul depicts the Cosmos as the old age which has been crucified and replaced with a καινὴ κτίσις.[56] In contrast to this negative depiction of Cosmos on the cross,[57] in Romans 8 Paul depicts Creation in a positive light. Rather than that to which the believer has been crucified to for the sake of new life, Creation in Romans is that with whom the believers wait for new life. "The κτίσις is not destined to pass away and to be replaced by another κτίσις but to be rescued from its current bondage to decay."[58] Whereas the cross of Christ means death for the Cosmos in Galatians, the revelation of the co-heirs of Christ means liberty for Creation in Romans.

In sum, Paul's personification of Creation in Romans 8 is unusual. Although the Earth groans in the OT, it moans due to coming destruction rather than in hope of life. In contrast to Philo's personification of the World who has not lost any of her strength, Creation in Romans waits for her former glory to be restored and surpassed. Whereas the Imperial Cult boasted that Mother Earth had been liberated by their Caesar, Creation in Romans still groans with birth pangs as she anticipates her day of liberation by her King. Furthermore, her pains are not those of messianic woes but of the longing for the day the Messiah returns. Finally, as opposed to the personification of Cosmos in Galatians, Creation in Romans is not the old age crucified to the Christian: rather, she suffers with the Christian in the futility of the old age until the liberation of the new age is fulfilled.

Before proposing purposes of the personification of Creation, we shall first discuss the role of the Spirit in the midst of the suffering saints.

2. The Provision and Prayer of the Spirit (Rom. 8.26-27)

In Paul's writings, there are times when the Spirit and God seem identical[59] and other times when the Holy Spirit is spoken of as if it were distinct from

56 This is consistent with Paul's view of Creation in 1 Cor. 7.31 as well; see Adams, Constructing the World, 182.

57 Galatians scholars tend to agree that this is indeed a negative depiction of the Cosmos. For example, Bruce goes so far to say that Cosmos here denotes an evil power opposed to God [F.F. Bruce, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982), 272]. According to Morris, Cosmos stands here for "a whole way of life" to which Paul considered himself dead [Leon Morris, *Galatians: Paul's Charter of Freedom* (Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP, 2003), 189]. Similarly, for Martyn, the Cosmos represents all that was once sacred and dependable to Paul as well as to "religious differentiation" [J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians* (New York: Doubleday, 1997), 564, 571]. See also, John M.G. Barclay, *Obeying the Truth* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 1988), 102.

58 Adams, *Constructing the World*, 189.

59 E.g. 1 Cor. 12.11, 18, 26.

God.[60] Although in the fourth century there was debate regarding whether the Holy Spirit is a divine person or not, Paul himself does not directly address this issue.[61] When Paul does discuss the nature of the Spirit, his comments are incidental to his main point, which is usually more "pragmatic than speculative."[62]

It is beyond the scope of this thesis to conclude whether Paul's Holy Spirit is a representative personification (i.e. an aspect of God), a hypostasis (i.e. somewhere between a personification and a distinct being), or a Trinitarian person. As we stated above, from a literary perspective, "spirit" here can be seen as a personification of an abstract concept that has been given personal aspects and placed as the subject of verbs most often associated with humans.

For example, to those suffering saints, the Spirit comes to their aid (συναντιλαμβάνω), a verb which usually refers "to humans taking up a portion of each other's work."[63] Furthermore, the Spirit prays for the saints, an act attributed only to humans and angels, not to God or his Spirit, before this letter.[64] Therefore, we shall discuss the role of the Spirit in association to the personification of Creation and the suffering Christian.

In 8.26-27, the Spirit is the agent who comes to the aid of the righteous in their weakness. It stands alongside them as they persevere and guides their cries as they pray.[65] Paul does not say that the saints outgrow sufferings by becoming spiritually mature.[66] Instead, the Spirit meets the believer in weakness: he does not deliver from it.[67] Just as the event of Christ's resurrection does not remove afflictions (Rom. 5.1-11), neither does Pentecost. The former leads to a boast in the face of affliction, the latter, prayer in the midst of weaknesses. This condition of weakness and affliction[68] is a reality, but so is the aid of the Holy Spirit within them.

Earlier, through the Spirit of adoption, divine children cry out to God, "Abba Father" (v. 15). Here, the Spirit of God cries out on behalf of these children. The Spirit aids the believers by praying for the saints with a groaning

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60 E.g. 1 Cor. 12.4-6; 2 Cor. 13.13. T. Paige, "Holy Spirit," in *Dictionary of Paul and his Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (Grand Rapids: IVP, 1993), 405-406.

61 Ibid., 405-406. See also George MacRae, "A Note on Romans 8:26-27," *HTR* 73 (1980), 227-230.

62 Ibid.

63 Jewett, *Romans,* 521. E.g. Luke 10.40; Exod. 18.22 and Num. 11.17. Cf. Ps. 89.21

64 Ibid., 523-524. According to Jewett, although there was a general idea of divine intercession during Paul's time, the apostle is the first to record it.

65 Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2007), 521.

66 Leander E. Keck, *Romans* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 214. Rather Paul "refuses to accept the premise held by some in the early church that the gift of the Spirit lifts believers above weakness," [Robert Jewett, *Romans*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006), 522].

67 Morris, *Romans*, 326.

68 I.e. the "totality of the human condition," [Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, 477].

reminiscent of that of Creation.[69] In this, "having the Spirit does not isolate the believer from the unredeemed Creation; rather it reinforces the believer's solidarity with the creation."[70]

Moreover, the Spirit's ministry is effective because the believer does not know what[71] she should pray.[72] This ignorance in prayer exemplifies the weakness of the believers in their "not-yet" state.[73] God and the Spirit are not ignorant, however. While the Christian may be deeply confused as to why God allows them to suffer, the Spirit knows the will of God for his groaning creation and can pray appropriately according to the divine will,[74] through which "all things work for the good of those who love God" (v. 28).[75]

3. The Purposes for Personified Creation and the Holy Spirit

To appeal to sympathy

Paul portrays Creation as a mother writhing in pain as she awaits divine salvation. The verb ὠδίνω points to the extreme pain of child birth,[76] the quivering of the mother due to the physical exertion, contraction, pressure and stress at the beginning of labour.[77] When used metaphorically, the verb expresses indescribable pain. Such a depiction gives the personification poetic boldness, whose imaginative power and feeling for the evocative word inspire

69 This is not to say that the Spirit also groans "in futility" like Creation, but that like Creation it "groans with" the believer in the midst of suffering.

70 Keck, *Romans,* 212.

71 See Morris, *Romans*, 326 fn 112; Keck, *Romans*, 214; Moo, *Romans*, 523.

72 Morris lists Paul's prayer in 2 Cor. 12.7-9, Moses' prayer in Deut. 3.25-26, and Jeremiah's prayer in Jer. 15.1 as examples of not knowing what to pray (p. 327).

73 J. A. Ziesler, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (London: SCM Press, 1989), 223.

74 For the reading of the Spirit (rather than God) as the one who searches the human spirit, see MacRae, "Romans 8," 227-230.

75 For the reading of "the Spirit works afflictions for good" see Gordon Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*, 4 ed. (Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson, 1999), 589 and Matthew Black, "The Interpretation of Romans 8:28," in *Neotestamentica et Patristica (Festschrift for Oscar Cullmann)* (Leiden: Brill, 1962), 166-172.

76 An example of how this was used as a phrase to explain horrific pain can be seen in 4 Macc. 15.16 where the pain of a mother watching the torture and death of her seven sons is described as pain even greater than birth pangs. Another example is seen in Homer's Cyclops who uses the same two root verbs as Paul: And the Cyclops groaning and suffering (στενάζων τε καὶ ὠδινων) as in the pains of childbirth cried: "Nobody has tricked me!" (*Odyssey* 9.415).

77 Georg Bertram, "ΩΔΙΝΩ," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1974), 668-669. Bertram notes that it is first used metaphorically in Homer's *Iliad* to refer to sudden and violent pains resulting from battle wounds (Il. 11, 269, and 271).

deep sensitivity and universal sympathy.[78] In this sense, then, the personification would serve the purpose of affecting emotions. [79] Rather than an "appeal to pity,"[80] Paul uses personification here as an appeal to sympathy. They suffer with Creation and she suffers with them. This leads to the next purpose.

To associate Creation with the Christian

The personification also helps Paul associate Creation with the Christian.[81] It is significant that the only other place Paul uses στενάζω is in reference to believers in 2 Cor. 5.2,4. There, Paul depicts Christians as those who groan because they long to be released from the burden of the mortal body, the temporary tent, as they anticipate the mortal to be swallowed by life when they are clothed in their heavenly dwelling.[82] The parallels between this passage and Rom. 8.22-23 are striking, since now Paul presents Creation with a similar groan and longing. That Paul personifies the less common term κτίσις rather than the more common term κόσμος perhaps indicates Paul's preference of κτίσις due to the close proximity in which κτίσις places Creation to Christians, who Paul sees as a new creation, καινὴ κτίσις (2 Cor. 5.7).

Whereas Paul has used personification to demonstrate the relationship of unbelievers with Sin, Death and the Law and to identify the believers with Grace and Righteousness instead, here the apostle places Creation on the side of the Christians as well.

To deflect attention away from the current problem and to defer the solution to the future

In association with an appeal to sympathy and the connexion of the Christian with personified Creation, Paul diverts some of the attention away from the Christians' problem of suffering to that of Creation's and defers the solution to both of their problems to the future. For Paul, present suffering is necessary for future glory; therefore, just as Creation in her necessary present suffering is on tenterhooks as she aches for the future glory to be revealed in the sons of God

78 Cranfield, "Observations," 225.

79 See purposes of metaphor according to Quintilian, *Inst.* 8.6.18-19.

80 See purposes of metaphor according to the author of *Rhetorica Ad Herennium* IV.LIII.66.

81 Cf. Hahne, *Creation*, 221: "Personification points to the solidarity between humanity and nature."

82 Cf. J. Schneider, "ΚΟΣΜΟΣ," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 600-603.

(to whom her fate is tied), so also should believers wait for the revelation of the Son of God (from whom their destiny is derived).[83]

Through the personification, then, Paul shows the believers that they are not alone in their suffering—they have the company of Creation. Nor are they without hope—cosmic and Christian redemption is near, closer now than when they first believed. With this personification, Paul defers to the future while "underlining the greatness of Christian hope," which is even longed for by Creation.[84] So great is this future glory for the small band of believers that the personified World revolves around them. Therefore, the apostle dazzles the Christian with the beauty of this glory,[85] which is so good, even Creation longs for it. The picture of Creation as a person affects the emotions of the reader and, by magnifying their importance, encourages the believers to persevere in suffering until that day.[86]

The believers not only have the presence of Creation in suffering, they have the aid of the Spirit, who affirms their hope and even prays for them. Rather than the effective prayers of a patriarch such as Abraham, Enoch, Moses or an angel interceding on their behalf as seen in the OT and other Jewish writings of the time, the Spirit of God himself prays for the believers in the midst of their afflictions. Just as nothing can separate the believer from the love of Christ, neither can any hardship separate them from the Spirit of God. The Spirit is a guarantee of future salvation for both the Creation and the Christians: indeed, "what the Spirit is for the Christian, the Christian is for all creation—foretaste and pledge of what is to come."[87] It is because the saints have tasted this glory and have the hope of this pledge that they groan[88] in the Spirit and with Creation.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have shown that, despite commentators' emphasis on the similarities between Paul's personification with surrounding personifications

83 Here then, Creation is "a model for humans to emulate," [Hahne, *Creation*, 221].

84 Cranfield, "Observations," 229: He considers the personification a "very natural one to express the thought of severe distress from which a happy and worthwhile issue is to be looked for," [Cranfield, *Romans*, 416 fn. 2]. Similarly Kuss states that Paul has to personify Creation in order to capture fully the theological sense—the hope of the children of God is greater than the current condition of nature [Kuss, *Der Römerbrief*, 634-635]. Thus, Moo concludes the personification conveys "the cosmic significance of both humanity's fall into sin and believers' restoration to glory," [Moo, *Romans*, 514].

85 Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 434.

86 See Ibid., 438.

87 Keck, *Romans*, 212.

88 For the optional reading, "Although we have the Spirit, we groan," see Morris, *Romans*, 324.

of Earth and nature, Creation in Romans 8 differs greatly from these. As opposed to OT personifications, Paul's Creation groans in the hope of liberation not the fear of destruction. In contrast to personified Earth in Philo, Creation in Romans has lost her former strength and experiences birth pangs. As Jewett has demonstrated, Paul depicts Creation as a slave who waits for release while the Imperial Cult presented Mother Earth as having already been liberated by Rome. Furthermore, the groans of Creation in Romans are not the birth pangs in the gospels. Paul's personification of Creation in Romans not only differs from these other personifications, but it even contrasts his previous personification of Cosmos in Gal. 6.14, where Cosmos is that which is crucified to the Christian rather than that which suffers with the believer till the day of redemption.

We concluded that Paul personifies Creation in order to appeal to sympathy, to associate Creation with the Christian, and also with the mention of the Spirit, to deflect attention away from the current pain of believers to the condition of Creation and the presence of the Spirit as well as to defer the solution to their suffering to the future.

Section III:
Summary and Synthesis

Summary

In section III, we studied the personifications which occur in Romans. In chapter 8, we discussed Paul's personification of Sin and Death and concluded that Paul used these personifications for various purposes. For example, in 5.12-21, Paul places the blame for the current state of the world on both these personifications and humanity so as to distance God from the blame. The work of personified Sin and Death, then, serves as a foil to God's work in Jesus Christ, the divine response to evil in the world.

In Romans 6, however, Sin develops from an external power to an internal one as well. Now, Paul employs the personification of Sin primarily to explain an unholy life and its results in terms that his audience could better understand, so that they would be motivated to avoid evil and live righteous lives instead. Finally, whereas Paul uses these personifications to distance God from the blame of Sin and Death in 5.12-21, he stresses the power of Sin in 7.9-25 in order to distance the Law from Sin and to stress the impotence of humanity before Sin and under the Law.

Therefore, our research adds to the discussion of whether Paul places the blame of evil on supernatural powers or humanity. Whether or not Paul considers Sin and Death as malefic powers, the relationships which Paul presents between the personification of Sin and people argue for both an external influence and personal culpability (although at times Paul may stress one over the other). In other words, the personification of Sin as a ruler and as a slave master enables Paul to demonstrate humankind's concrete partnership with abstract evil.

This relationship of Sin as a ruler should no longer apply to believers however, since the reign of Sin has now been supplanted by the rule of Grace in their lives. Nevertheless, as a slave master, Sin will indeed enslave the believers if they *choose* to cooperate with it by presenting themselves to it for the sake of obedience. Within these two accounts, a degree of cooperation exists between humanity and Sin. In fact, personified Sin is not depicted as a tyrant power until 7.9-11. However, even there where Ego professes to be a victim of Sin, he goes on to admit that his own flesh still works with Sin. Therefore, the blame of evil does not fall upon the personification alone but upon humanity as well.

Next, in chapter 9, we discussed the personification of the Law (Nomos). There, we concluded that Paul personifies Nomos to bring out its negative aspects in order to distance the Law from God's saving work of Grace. Therefore, the Law enters as its own agent in disguise in order to condemn rather than to save, to increase trespass rather than remove Sin, and to lord over the unredeemed rather than liberate the people of God. Furthermore, Paul appeals to the authority of scripture by having Nomos himself speak so as to prove Paul's point that the Law judges rather than justifies. We demonstrated that Paul's personification of Nomos as a witness against people has a precedent in the OT as well as parallels in Greco-Roman literature.

Chapter 10 focused on the personifications of Grace and Righteousness—which develop from gifts, by which the Christian reigns, to a ruler and a slave master who now reign over the Christian. Later, Dikaiosyne is personified once more as she speaks in order to argue that the Law does not justify. Even though Paul has the person of Jesus Christ, he still resorts to personification to stress the importance of grace in contrast to the Law and righteousness in contrast to sin.

The personification of Righteousness as a slave master helps Paul explain the Christian's ethical obligation and serves to motivate them to fulfil this responsibility. Finally, just as the apostle personified Law in order to appeal to authority, so he also personifies Dikaiosyne for the same purpose; both appeals serve to distance the Law that condemns from God's work of grace that saves. However, whereas Nomos speaks to condemn humanity, Righteousness speaks to save them.

In the last chapter, we discussed personified Creation, which Paul employs to underline Christian hope in the midst of suffering, appealing to sympathy for Creation's current agony and associating Creation with the believer in affliction. Through personified Creation and the Spirit, he defers the solution to the future *eschaton*. Moreover, along with this personification Paul mentions the aid of the Holy Spirit in order to deflect some of the attention away from the problem of current suffering of Christians to the suffering of Creation and the ministry of the Spirit.

Synthesis

Having now looked at the individual personifications, we should step back and consider them together. Personified Nomos stands between Sin and Death on the one side and Grace and Righteousness on the other. From 5.20, Nomos enters to increase trespass and thus aid the reign of Sin so that, as we see in 6.15 and 7.1-6, to be under the reign of Sin is to be under Law and *vice versa*. In 7.9-25, Paul expands and qualifies the relationship between Sin and Law

further: rather than Nomos increasing Sin, now Sin uses Nomos which results in Death.

This process, however, effectively exposes the nature and work of Sin (7.13). Therefore, we see that although Nomos increases trespass and (like Sin and Death) rules over unredeemed humanity, the Law serves one valuable purpose: it exposes the sins and Sin in humanity (3.19-20; 5.13; 7.9-25) which otherwise would remain hidden. In short, whereas Sin manipulates Nomos to produce Death, through Death, Nomos exposes Sin.

Despite the work of demonstrating the sinfulness of Sin, Nomos still remains in juxtaposition with Grace. Whereas Nomos increases Sin, Grace surpasses it (5.20). Whereas unredeemed humanity remains under Nomos, the redeemed live in the sphere of Grace (6.15). Similarly, as opposed to Dikaiosyne (10.5-9), Nomos does not justify humanity in the sight of God: it condemns them in their sin before him (3.19-20). Whereas the personification of Nomos reveals the negative aspects of the Law, personified Righteousness stresses the positive aspects of Paul's gospel. Whereas Law increases trespass, Dikaiosyne results in holiness. Whereas the Law accuses humanity, Dikaiosyne presents people with the gospel.

Grace and Dikaiosyne also stand in juxtaposition with Sin and Death: where Sin abounds Grace abounds all the more. Sin and Death may rule over the unredeemed, but Grace reigns over the righteous. So also, the wages of Sin is death, but the result of Dikaiosyne is eternal life. Moreover, Grace parallels Dikaiosyne in the sense that both represent the gospel of Jesus Christ—the former as the gospel's power to redeem humanity from Sin and Death, the latter as the gospel's work to justify humanity by faith rather than by deeds of the Law. In contrast to the personifications of Sin and Death, then, the personifications of Grace and Righteousness are *not* employed to distance God from the problem of evil; instead, they serve to underscore God's solution to it.

Personified Creation's connexion to these other personifications is with the entrance of Sin and Death into the world. Creation suffers in futility because she is bound to the corruption which resulted from the fall of humanity. Whereas in 7.9-25 Nomos as a victim of Sin exposes Sin in humanity, Creation as a victim of Sin and Death reveals their corrupting effects in the world. Creation's only hope is found with those redeemed from Sin by Grace and saved by Dikaiosyne rather than condemned by Nomos. When these saints are revealed, Creation will finally have freedom. Until then, the World groans with the suffering believers while the Spirit groans in and through them.

Conclusion

Having now looked at these personifications together, we conclude that within all of Romans, Paul primarily uses personification in chapters 5-8, where he tries to explain three difficult issues of theodicy. 1) Why is there sin and death in the world? 2) Why did not the Law remedy the world of sin and death? 3) And why do those set free from sin and death still suffer in this world?

In response to the first question, by making Sin and Death agents, Paul distances God from the entrance of evil in the world. The blame is not on God, but on Adam and humanity who participate with Sin. To exonerate God then, Paul sets up the work of personified Sin and Death to serve as a foil for the divine solution through Christ and the reign of his Grace. Therefore, if the believers still struggle with Sin, it is their own fault: since God has saved them from the regime of Sin, they should no longer participate in it.

Similarly, by having the Nomos enter under the guise of a friend, Paul distances the condemnation of the Law from God's work in the gospel. In contrast to God's Grace who rules over the redeemed and his Righteousness who enslaves them, the Law reigns over the unredeemed and incites trespass within them. Nevertheless, by stressing the power of personified Sin, Paul distances the Law from Sin as well. Nomos is not Sin, but a victim of it who eventually works against it.

While Paul seeks to distance God from the entrance of Sin and the negative work of the Law, he desires to stress God's sovereignty in the midst of the suffering of his children. In this discussion of righteous suffering, then, Paul seeks to encourage the believers by personifying Creation and referring to the Spirit. With the depiction of Creation as a woman in the pangs of childbirth who labours in hope for the future, Paul diverts some of the attention away from the present suffering of believers to the current suffering and future redemption of Creation. So also, with the groans of Creation and the Spirit, the apostle reminds the suffering saints that they are not alone in affliction: Creation shares their pain and the Spirit meets them in it.

In sum, it seems to us then that the reason personifications dominate Romans 5-8 compared to the other chapters in Romans is that Paul feels the need to resort to personification as he attempts to get around the difficult problems of why there is evil in God's world, why God's Law did not remedy the situation, and why those who have been redeemed and set free from Sin and Death still suffer. We shall discuss this in more detail in the next section, where we shall turn to compare and contrast the personifications in *Wisdom* with those in Romans.

Section IV: Introduction

In the introduction of this work, we discussed the value of comparing *Wisdom* and Romans and the insight that no one has compared the role of personification in the two works despite the fact that both authors employ the trope at key points in their arguments. We also explained that, although some have studied the relationships of individual personifications in the respective writings, no one has considered the individual personifications in relation to all the personifications used in the entire work. For this reason, in each work, we set out to investigate the parts in light of the whole so that we could compare the authors' utilisations of the trope. In section I, we defined personification and proposed possible purposes for it. In sections II-III, we explored the personifications employed in the respective works.

Now, in this last section we shall compare the personifications the sage and Paul have in common, namely Death (chapter 12) and Creation (chapter 13). In chapter 14, we shall turn to our primary questions: In what contexts and for what purposes do the sage in *Wisdom* and Paul in Romans employ personification? We shall submit that in *Wisdom* and Romans, personification is most often employed in contexts dealing with theodicy—specifically questions arising from the presence of evil in God's world, the history of Israel, and the suffering of the righteous. We propose that the sage and Paul chiefly use personification to distance God from the origin and work of evil in the world, to divert attention away from apparent problems, and to encourage the godly in the midst of suffering.

Chapter 12

The Personifications of Evil in *Wisdom* and Romans

Introduction

Since both Paul and the sage use personifications of evil, we shall now compare the terminology with which they refer to these personifications as well as with what they associate these personifications (1). We shall follow this with a discussion of the relationship of humanity with personified evils (2). We shall then discuss the background and parallels to these personifications in *Wisdom* and Romans (3), and how these personifications reveal the authors' ideas about the plight of humanity as they serve as foils for the solutions to that plight (4). Finally, we shall compare the purposes for the personifications in *Wisdom* and Romans (5).

It will be argued that the authors place their personifications of evil in juxtaposition to the work of God. For the sage, these personifications oppose God's work in creation while for the apostle they serve as a foil to God's work in Christ. Moreover, both use the trope to describe the absurd relationship between evil and humanity. Whereas the sage distances Adam from this absurd relationship and sees only the ungodly in partnership with evil, Paul blames Adam directly for humanity's relationship with Sin and Death and insists that all people were once under the rule of these evil personifications.

For the sage, then, the solution to evil is found in a dynamic relationship with Sophia which will culminate at the Visitation of the Lord, while for Paul, it is found in the participation in the death, resurrection and *Parousia* of Christ. Finally, while the sage employs the trope to persuade his audience to avoid evil and pursue salvation, Paul uses personification primarily to explain the implications of the salvation from evil which his audience already possesses.

1. Terminology and Associations

Passages from *Wisdom*

…God did not make death, neither does he delight in the destruction of the living, for he created all things to live; the origins of the cosmos are wholesome and the poison of destruction is not in them, neither does Hades have a throne on earth…But the ungodly, considering Death their lover, pined away. Beseeching him with their calls and beckoning him with their hands, they made a deal with Death for they were worthy of him (Wis. 1.13-16).

God created the man for incorruptibility and he made him to be the likeness of his own eternity, but through the envy of the Devil, Death entered into the Cosmos and those worthy of him experienced him (Wis. 2.23-24).

Passages from Romans

Therefore, just as through one man Sin entered into the cosmos so also through Sin, Death came in as well; thus, Death spread to all humanity, since all had sinned. For until the Law, Sin was in the world, but Sin was not reckoned since the Law had not yet come. But Death ruled from Adam until Moses… In order that just as Sin ruled in Death, so also Grace reigned through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 5.12-14, 21).

Knowing that since Christ was raised from the dead and can no longer die, Death no longer rules over him. Therefore, do not let Sin rule in your mortal bodies so that you obey her desires. Neither present your members as weapons of unrighteousness to Sin, but instead present yourselves to God and your members as weapons of righteousness to God, as those who conquered death. For Sin does not rule over you, for you are not under Law but Grace (Rom. 6.9, 12-14).

But, seizing the opportunity through the command, Sin worked in me every kind of desire —for outside of the Law, Sin is dead. Yet, at that time I was alive outside of the Law, but at the coming of the command, Sin sprang to life (Rom. 7.9)

For we know that the Law is spiritual, but I am the opposite, since I have been sold as a slave to Sin—so much a slave, I do not even know what I do… But now, it is no longer I that does that which I hate: it is Sin dwelling in me (Rom. 7.14, 17).

The sage and Paul use various terms for the personification of evil such as Sin, Death, Corruption and Hades. Moreover, both authors take the common personifications of Death and Sin and employ them in an unusual manner. The sage personifies Death as a lover while Paul presents Sin as a slave master and

lord. Both authors personify Death as an evil power; yet, whereas Paul places Sin as the partner and forerunner of Death,[1] the sage places the Devil as the partner of and agency for Death.

Like the sage, Paul also refers to the archenemy of God, namely Satan (Rom. 16.20). In comparing the two works and seeing that both personify Death as entering into the cosmos, the fact that the sage pairs Death with the Devil gives more credence to the possibility that Paul also sees Sin and Death in association with the Devil. The sage refers to the Devil as having envy and places him in relationship to the fools who persecute the righteous, while the apostle refers to Satan in relationship to false teachers who seek to corrupt the doctrine of the elect (16.20).

Although both authors mention the Devil, they spend more time on the personifications of Death and Sin. Neither the sage nor Paul is concerned with *from where* these evil personifications came, only *that* they came. *Wisdom* remains content in merely discussing through whom Death came and the consequential judgment on these people.[2] His focus is on how the entrance of Death is dialectically opposed to the nature of creation. Paul, on the other hand, concentrates on the ultimate solution to Sin and Death, namely personified Grace and Righteousness and the person of Jesus Christ. Therefore, placing these personifications from *Wisdom* and Romans side by side reveals that while the sage positions evil personifications in juxtaposition to *the work of God in creation*, Paul's discourse on the personifications serves as a foil for *the work of God in Christ*.

2. The Partnership Paradigm

Paul and the sage do not focus on evil personifications alone. Instead, they discuss in various degrees and to different extents the relationship between evil personifications and people. The amount of blame placed upon humanity fluctuates in both works seemingly without qualification. In *Wisdom*, there is a shift from a framework where impious mankind is in partnership with evil (*Wisdom* 1) to a framework where he blames the Devil (*Wisdom* 2) and then to a place where fools have sole responsibility (*Wisdom* 13-14); in Romans there is a shift from a framework where mankind has sole responsibility (Romans 1-

1 The sage only refers to ἁμαρτία twice in his work (1.4; 10.13); however, it is questionable whether or not ἁμαρτία refers to an evil power or merely to an ungodly action in these two verses.

2 The sage makes no more mention of the Devil.

3) to one where humanity freely cooperates with evil (Romans 5-6) and finally to a place where Ego is a victim of Sin (Rom. 7.9-25).[3]

Although scholars have suggested different paradigms to explain the relationship between humanity and evil in *Wisdom* 1-2 and Rom. 5.12-21,[4] by looking at the passages from the perspective of the personifications, we find that both authors present a partnership paradigm:[5] humanity is depicted to some extent in cooperation with evil which results in the introduction of death into the world. Indeed, there may be times within the partnership paradigm where either humanity or personified evil is marginalised for the sake of emphasising one over the other. Yet, neither the blame of humanity nor of personified evil is ever eliminated; rather, both are presented as guilty for their evil actions.

Two questions arise in light of a partnership paradigm. First, *which party initiates this relationship—the personifications or humanity?* Here, one needs to discern whether the personifications of evil are portrayed as deceiving or

3 Through vice lists, both authors enumerate the evident results of idolatry (Wis. 14.23-26; Rom. 1.29-31).

4 Cf. Martinus C. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 85-91. De Boer introduces "two tracks of Jewish apocalyptic eschatology" to serve as heuristic frameworks. In the first track, which he refers to as "cosmological apocalyptic eschatology," man's role in the entrance of evil is primarily as a victim. Within this framework, it is angelic powers that are responsible for human sinfulness and its consequence, death. Mankind stands impotent before these supra-human powers and the elect must simply wait for divine intervention to remedy the dire situation. In the second track, which he designates as "forensic apocalyptic eschatology," it is humans who are responsible for sin (i.e. the wilful rejection of the Creator) and for death (i.e. the result and punishment for sin). Forensic apocalyptic eschatology operates within "the motif of a human fall" (e.g. the framework of Adam and Eve). As opposed to the first track, within forensic apocalyptic eschatology, God has given the Law to remedy the man-made situation; therefore, how one responds to this Law determines one's destiny.

5 The partnership paradigm is a hybrid construction of de Boer's two tracks (see previous footnote), in that it contains both forensic and cosmological elements. For example, it operates within the motif of the human fall, as de Boer's forensic track does, but it also includes wicked powers as responsible agents as in the cosmological track. Furthermore, as in the forensic model, God has given a remedy for the situation made by ungodly people and evil powers. *Rather than the law, Sophia is the remedy in Wisdom, as the gospel is in Romans. For the sage, one must embrace Lady Wisdom rather than cooperate with Death, and for Paul, one must participate in the death and resurrection of Christ rather than in Sin and Death.* The remedy of Sophia and the gospel of Christ, nevertheless, still include a futuristic divine intervention as in the cosmological framework.

forcing their way into the realm of humanity or whether people are depicted as the initiators who open the door for evil. The initiation may, however, be presented as mutual in which both parties meet in the middle. Therefore, one should ask whether one group is presented with words of dominance and assertion while the other with reluctance or regret. The answer to the first question may have bearings upon the second question: *To what extent is the cooperation partial or full?*

In Wis. 1.15-16, the role of Death was simply to respond to the invitation of fools. The poison of corruption and the reign of Hades did not force their way into God's world by power, sexual desire or deceitful scheme. [6] That is to say, Death did not have to woo the wicked: the wicked sought after him. Death only had to sit on the throne.[7] Even though this passage presents this alliance as a one-sided initiation by humanity, there is nothing to suggest that Death entered under duress.

Although the role of Death is not emphasised as much as the role of humanity in Wis. 1.15-6, its full compliance, which is tacit there, is made explicit in Wis. 2.21-24, where the sage depicts Death and the Devil (rather than the ungodly) as the primary initiators and agents of evil. In other words, whereas the sage minimised the active role of Death by placing the brunt of blame upon the agency of mankind in Wis. 1.12-15, here, he introduces the Devil as the agent who shares in the blame.[8] Yet, the lack of reluctance or regret by the fools (and their previous speech in Wis. 2.1-20) points toward full compliance on their part. Eventually, the fools will have regret, but it will not come until they realise the end result of such a partnership (Wis. 5.1-14).

In Rom. 5.12-21, Paul does not say whether Sin or Adam initiated contact. There is no mention of Sin deceiving or forcing its way into the cosmos, nor are there statements of reluctance or regret at its reign. Instead, with the parallel of personified Death in *Wisdom*, it seems likely that the act was mutual—humanity opened the door through which Sin and Death were obliged to enter. Perhaps the acquiescence is as full as that of those in Rom. 1.32, where the ungodly not only comply, they applaud the compliance of others. The partnership is whole-hearted enough that Paul charges those who had

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6 Cf. Genesis 6, 1 *Enoch* 6-25, *Jubilees* 4-5; The *Life of Adam and Eve*.

7 Comparing this alliance with 2 Sam. 5.3, Amir argues that this covenant is not "an alliance between equals, but a submission of the wicked to the rule of Death…Death is enthroned by the wicked as their overlord," [Yehoshua Amir, "The Figure of Death in the 'Book of Wisdom'," *JJS* 30 (1979), 163]. Cf. Kolarcik who argues that the passage implies that the fools become the victims and prey of Death [Michael Kolarcik, *The Ambiguity of Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-6* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991), 70].

8 David Winston cites sources to demonstrate how many rabbis considered Death and the Devil as synonymous [David Winston, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1979), 113]. Cf. Amir, "Death," 154-156. Cf. also Pseudo-Philo 13.8-9. This very connexion with the Devil and the origin of death is one of, if not the earliest explicit associations of the two together.

already been set free from the reign of Sin to stop submitting to its rule once and for all.

As opposed to *Wisdom* 1 where it is only the damned who partner with Death, in Romans 6, Paul commands the Christians to cease and desist the cooperation with and service to Sin. As with Rom. 5.12-21, there is no mention here of Sin forcing its way with the believer or of their deception by her. So also here, the fact that Paul charges the believers not only to resist Sin's rule but to stop actively giving their bodies over to Sin suggests that a believer can be in full compliance with the work of Sin, no matter how absurd such a relationship might be. There is one reference to regret in Rom. 6.21—'the only thing you reaped from those things is shame.' This statement refers to vv. 17-18, which reminds them of their previous activity of which, after their redemption, they were ashamed. The apostle, then, refers to past regret to inspire present reluctance for any current participation with Sin.

Paul however demonstrates the sinners' regret more fully in Rom. 7.9-25. In contrast to what Paul said about the sin of humanity in Romans 1 and 5, it seems from Ego's testimony alone that he did not ask for, nor did he initiate, this encounter at all. Instead, he claims to be an innocent bystander who was deceived and murdered by Sin. Before Sin launched its attack, Ego protests, "I was alive." Even in spite of Sin's deception, Paul does not release Ego from blame; rather Paul demonstrates that cooperation between Sin and Ego still exists. Although Sin works within Ego "every desire," these desires still belong to Ego. Thus, even though the cooperation was not comprehensive, it was at least partial, since Ego's flesh did indeed participate.

Again, our comparison reveals that this idea of partial partnership does not occur in *Wisdom*; for the sage the relationship is all or nothing. Whereas the sage never emphasises humankind as victim but displays the ungodly as in full compliance with the personifications of evil, in at least one place Paul has a person argue that humanity is the victim of Sin,[9] although the victim regrettably admits that at least a part of him is in partial compliance with the evil personification. Whereas the apostle depicts humanity as deceived in Rom. 7.7-11, for the sage, the deception of ungodly is self-imposed (Wis. 2.21).

Finally, with this partnership paradigm, *the sage shows the absurdity of a relationship with Death by contrasting it with God's character and creation*, while *Paul seeks to show the absurdity of a relationship with Sin because of the believers' partnership with Christ*. The absurdity is stressed even more as the fools shamelessly use their body parts to relate to Death and Sin. How incredible is it that people hail Death with the very hands and voices that God

9 Cf. Stephen Westerholm, "Paul's Anthropological 'Pessimism' in its Jewish Context," in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and his Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 79.

gave them? So also, how unbelievable would it be, if Christians offer their bodies to the very Sin from which they have been delivered?

3. The Background of Genesis 3

Both the sage and the apostle draw from Genesis 3 and reinterpret the passage by including the personification of Death. Strangely, although both refer to personified Death, neither mentions the serpent already personified in Genesis 3. Furthermore, in the original Fall narrative, death is not pictured as an enemy power, but as a consequence of Adam and Eve's disobedience, which led to their expulsion from Eden and the Tree of Life within it.[10] In an unusual twist, *the sage depicts Death as an enemy power who works in spite of what God did in creation in Genesis 1-2*. Once again by comparing personifications in *Wisdom* and Romans, we realise that whereas the sage concentrates on the work of Death in contrast to the glorious nature of creation, Paul's *focus* is on the work of God in response to the sin of humanity and curse of creation resulting from Genesis 3.

Even with the mention of these evil personifications, at times both authors also maintain that the entrance of evil was contingent upon human agency.[11] In Wis. 1.16, the entrance of evil resulted from the ungodly beckoning and experimenting with Death. For the apostle, Sin and Death first found their way through the sin of Adam. In their accounts, however, the fall in Genesis 3 is generalised to apply to evil people in *Wisdom* 1-2 and all of humanity in Romans 5.

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10 In a sense, death is actually a blessing in Genesis 3: the Lord sends them out of the garden so that they *can* die rather than live eternally in such an accursed state. Furthermore, from the original account, the snake is simply one of the wild creatures made by God; even if the serpent is a "holdover from an earlier mythical tradition," within the Genesis narrative, it has been "demythologized, with the result that he is scarcely more than a literary tool used to pose the issue of life and death for human beings," [Bernhard W. Anderson, "Sin and the Powers of Chaos," in *Sin, Salvation, and the Spirit* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1979), 71].

11 For both *Wisdom* and Paul, however, the role of humanity in the history of sin does often have something to do with false assumptions. In *Wisdom*, crooked thoughts separate one from God (Wis. 1.3), while false assumptions blind the ungodly and either lead to their covenant with Death or to their worship of creation. In Romans, the unrighteous became futile in their thoughts and darkened in their understanding; they are fools who assume they are wise. Foolish thoughts led the impious to exchange the glory of God for corruptible images of creation or to pursue their own righteousness. So depraved are their thoughts that, in *Wisdom,* the fools call evil "peace" (Wis. 14.22), and similarly, in Romans, the ungodly suppose folly to be wisdom (Rom. 1.22), and even consider evil deeds commendable (Rom. 1.32).

Therefore, through our comparison, we see that *the sage downplays the role of Adam and blames only the impious for the entrance of Deat*h,[12] as he focuses on the absurdity of people's partnership with the personifications, while *Paul directly blames Adam, but includes all humanity as having a role in the entrance of Sin and Death as well.* Rather than on the absurdity of fools' partnership with Death, Paul focuses on the universality of the bondage under Sin and Death. Here, the sage goes against what Paul supports—the idea that "every man has become his own Adam" (2 Baruch 54.19).[13]

This point of divergence could be explained by the epoch of the gospel revealed to Paul on the road to Damascus, which would alter how Paul read Genesis 3. *For the sage, God's major work in history was through Lady Wisdom at creation and in the Exodus.* Therefore in *Wisdom*, both the work of creation and the Exodus are seen through the lenses of the work of Sophia. *For Paul, however, God's greatest work in history was through Jesus Christ at the cross and in his resurrection so that both creation and the Exodus are seen through the lenses of the work of Christ*.[14]

This follows Westerholm's conclusion that Paul's anthropological pessimism, which views all people as under Sin, "seems clearly a product of post-Damascus thinking."[15] According to Paul, if Christ died for all the sins of humankind, there is no other way to be made righteous.[16] Therefore, Paul's solution (as Sanders has shown) leads to his plight.[17] Since the sage did not share Paul's solution, neither does he infer the same plight.

4. The Solutions and Plights of Evil in *Wisdom* and Romans

For the sage, the plight is that Death is in the world of humanity, while the solution is that salvation from Death comes through a dynamic relationship with Lady Wisdom. The sage assumes his audience had a choice of whether to

12 Although the sage admits Adam's sin, he posits that Sophia delivered him from trespass (10.1-3). Instead, the sage places all the blame of destruction upon Cain in 10.1-3. There, the sage propounds that Cain was *not* delivered from his sin and, consequently, became the cause of the destruction of the world by the flood.

13 In fact, Paul is in "general agreement with his contemporaries in attributing the presence of death to the consequence of Adam's sin," [E. Earle Ellis, *Paul's Use of the Old Testament* (Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, 1957), 60]—e.g. *4 Ezra* 7.118; *Sirach* 25.24; *2 Baruch* 23.4.

14 E.g. Creation preaches the gospel (Romans 10) and the Exodus is allegorised as the gospel (1 Corinthians 10).

15 Westerholm, "Pessimism," 80. Although some might connect this idea with apocalyptic Judaism, Westerholm argues convincingly from Phil. 3.6 that Paul was optimistic before his encounter with Christ (pp. 80-81).

16 Gal. 2.21.

17 E.P. Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1977), 442-447.

belong to Death's lot or to dwell with Sophia.[18] Thus, *Wisdom* implores them not to follow in the footsteps of fools.[19] Although the sage admits that the elect have the capacity to sin, he insists they will not because they are elect—but even if they do, they still belong to God.[20] *For Paul, the plight is that no one has avoided Sin and Death; the only solution to the crisis, the only path to life, is to participate in the death of Christ.* Since Paul assumes his audience is the elect who had already participated in the death of Christ, he implores them to reject Sin's reign because they are now under the rule of Grace.

However, since both the sage and Paul assert that the elect are free from Death, both authors have to get around the fact that the elect still die. Since the sage holds that the righteous are not under Death, he explains, even if they seem to die, they are not really dead.[21] For Paul, even though believers have been set free from the condemnation of Sin and Death, Christians still die; they even face death daily for the sake of God.[22] Even so, the apostle insists that the believers are more than conquerors since not even Death can separate them from the love of Christ, whose resurrection they shall all share.

Furthermore, neither the sage nor Paul refers to the Torah as the solution to their plights. Rather, they point instead to a relationship with personified Wisdom and personified Grace, Righteousness and the person of Jesus Christ respectively.[23] Paul, however, does personify Law in association with personified Sin and Death. In Romans 5 and 7, Paul posits that humanity's relationship to the Law is very much part of the problem of the reign of Sin

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18 According to Winston, one of the major convictions of the sage is "that God has bestowed on human beings the privilege (or burden) of moral choice, and only in very rare instances does he ever interfere with the process…Thus, even in the case of the Canaanites, whose viciousness is innate and whose doom was sealed in advance, God did not bypass their capacity to make choices in spite of its futility. The Canaanite experience thus serves as a vivid illustration of the fact that no human being is merely a mechanical link in the universal causal chain, [David Winston, "Theodicy in the Wisdom of Solomon," in *Theodicy in the World of the Bible*, ed. Antti Laato and J.C. De Moor (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 543]. Cf. Timo Laato, *Paul and Judaism*, trans. T. McElwain (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995), 67 and Sanders, *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, 18.

19 Winston notes that "The splitting of humanity into two opposing camps constitutes a central teaching in both the Wisdom of Solomon and the Dead Sea Scrolls" [David Winston, "Wisdom in the Wisdom of Solomon," in *In Search of Wisdom: Essays in Memory of John G. Gammie*, ed. Leo G. Perdue (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1993), 159]. Cf. Loren T. Stuckenbruck, "Wisdom and Holiness at Qumran," in *Where Shall Wisdom Be Found* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999), 47-60.

20 See Wis. 15.1-3. On the contrary, the Canaanites, whose seed was evil, had the capacity to repent even though they would not.

21 Cf. Philo, *Det.* 47-48.

22 Rom. 8.36.

23 The sage only briefly refers to the Law in 18.4 and possibly 6.18. The sage does not identify Torah with Wisdom (contra Ben Sira); nor does he mention circumcision, Sabbath or Jewish dietary restrictions. For more on this see Winston, "Theodicy," 535; J.J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 196.

and Death, and at the same time, although not *the* solution, it is part of the solution in that it reveals Sin. Along with this idea, the apostle characterises the sin of humankind in terms dealing with the violation of the Torah in Rom. 5.12-21.

Perhaps the sage does not concern himself so much with the Torah because within his matrix, the salvation of Sophia does not cause one to question the role of the Law. Love for Sophia leads to the keeping of her laws, which may include Torah.[24] Or more likely, the Law's rigorous requirements or peculiar practices deemed it unattractive to the sage's audience,[25] so that the sage decides to focus on more appealing aspects of the faith instead, such as personified Creation and Lady Wisdom.[26] If this is the case, then both authors distance the Law from God's direct work of salvation.

The closest parallel in *Wisdom* to Paul's personification of the Law is the sage's personifications of Logos, Dike and Dynamis. Whereas the sage personifies the Logos who condemns and destroys the wicked (Wis. 18.15-17), Paul has the Law speak to condemn the wicked world in their sin (Rom. 3.19-20). Just as Nomos shuts the mouths of the wicked, Dike and Dynamis hold fools accountable for every word that proceeds from their lips.

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24 According to Winston, her laws probably refer to the statutes of natural law, so that like Philo the sage probably believed the Torah had tokens of divine wisdom, and that they were in harmony with the law of the universe. But Winston finds it significant that the sage chooses to focus on Wisdom and her laws of philosophy, science and the arts [Winston, *Wisdom of Solomon*, 157]. See also C. Marvin Pate, *The Reverse of the Curse* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000), 45-47; Don Garlington, *The Obedience of Faith* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1991), 75, fn. 5; and David Winston, "Philo and the Wisdom of Solomon on Creation, Revelation and Providence," in *Shem in the Tents of Japhet*, ed. James L. Kugel (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 115-116.

25 According to Barclay, in Alexandria, there was a "conscious repudiation of customs" regarded as "restrictive, even barbaric" in the erudite circles to which many of the Jews aspired to attend [John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora from Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE-117 CE)* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996), 106-107]. Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 12.186-189.

26 For this more likely view see Echard J. Schnabel, *Law and Wisdom from Ben Sira to Paul*, WUNT (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985), 131-133. "It is obvious" that the sage "seems to avoid references to the Jewish Law!" (p. 131). He continues: the sign of the Torah is played down for "apologetic reasons" (p. 132) so that "It is impossible to establish a concept of Law" in *Wisdom* (p. 133). So also Klaus Berger, "Die Gesetzesauslegung Jesu in der synoptischen Tradition und ihr Hintergrund im Alten Testament und im Spätjudentum" (Ludwig-Maximilians Universität, 1966), 45: there is a "faktische inhaltliche Reduzierung des alt Gesetzes" and a "weitgehende Identifizierung mit Sozialgeboten überhaupt." Cf. G. Ziener, *Die theologische Begriffsprache im Buche der Weisheit* (Bonn: Hanstein, 1956), 93: rather than the Law, it is in Sophia that one finds "der Offenbarungs-charakter (7,25b)" and "das Normative des Gesetz (6,18)."

5. Purposes for the Personifications of Evil in *Wisdom* and Romans

Both the sage and Paul employ these personifications to serve as foils to their proposed avenues of salvation. For the sage, his explanation of the entrance of Death as alien to God's character and cosmic plan, along with the results of such a relationship, serve as key reasons to avoid a partnership with Death and as prime motivators to embrace the salvation of Sophia instead.[27] In the end, one will either belong to the lot of Death or to the elect of God; thus for the sage, to refuse Death and to accept Sophia is the path to friendship with God for eternity.

Paul also presents humanity either on the side of evil powers or on the side of God. For Paul, however, the Roman believers have already been saved from Sin and Death through the work of Jesus Christ. Although they have been delivered over to the side of God, Christians can still participate with Sin, but they should not, since they are no longer obligated. Therefore, from our comparison we can infer that *whereas Wisdom employs personification so that the audience would embrace salvation, Paul employs personification in order to explain the implications of the salvation that his audience already possessed.* In chapter 14, we shall discuss the purposes of these personifications further, in light of all the other personifications in the two works.

Conclusion

The significance of comparing the personifications of evil in *Wisdom* and Romans, then, is that it stresses the similarities and differences in their anthropologies and soteriologies. For the sage, not all are depraved, but only those responsible for the entrance of Death. Therefore his audience should reject Death in order to embrace Sophia. For Paul, all humanity is depraved and, with Adam, responsible for the entrance of Sin and Death, rival rulers from whom his audience had been delivered not by Law but through faith.

27 B.R. Gaventa, "The Rhetoric of Death in the Wisdom of Solomon and the Letters of Paul," in *The Listening Heart*, ed. Kenneth G. Hoglund (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 140.

Chapter 13

The Personifications of Creation in *Wisdom* and Romans

Introduction

As we saw in chapters 4 and 11, Creation plays a critical role throughout *Wisdom* and Romans and, in fact, the authors refer to Creation with similar senses and statements.[1] We shall now compare the authors' personifications of Creation beginning with their Greco-Roman backdrop (1), where we shall demonstrate that debate surrounded the topic of Creation during the time of our authors. After surveying this debate on the nature of Creation, we can then see where the sage and Paul fall within it (2). Next, we shall discuss the OT sources from which they draw, comparing the manner in which each author employed these sources (3), following this with a discussion of where and why the sage and the apostle personified Creation (4). Finally, we shall conclude with the significance of our comparison of Creation in the two accounts.

Through our comparison, it will be argued that although both authors refer to the world as that which was created, the sage avoids stating that Creation is corrupt while Paul stresses this condition. For the former, Creation is a conquering hero, for the latter the World is a suffering slave. Furthermore, although both draw from the personification of the earth and nature in the OT, the sage goes beyond these parallels to present Creation as the defender of Israel rather than just a divine tool of judgment. So also, Paul draws from different OT passages for his personification, but like the sage, he adjusts the portrayals. Rather than groaning at imminent destruction, Creation groans for imminent redemption on the day of the Lord. Therefore, for the sage, the World is a warrior who fights for the saints and for Paul, Creation is a victim who suffers with them.

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1 See Edward Adams, *Constructing the World* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000), 192.

1. The Debate on the Nature of Creation

The nature of Creation was often discussed in the Greco-Roman world, where Cosmos was generally a term of praise and admiration used to designate the natural order and goodness of the universe.[2] Plato sums up a common view during that time, seeing Cosmos as "a visible, living being who encompasses other visible beings, a perceptible god in the image of the Perceptible, the greatest and best, most excellent and complete."[3] Similarly, in his discussion on creation, Philo discusses the common view of the Cosmos as a rational nature (φύσις λογική) which has both life (ἔμψυχος) and intellect (νοερός).[4] According to him, Cosmos is the only beloved seed of God and son of Wisdom.[5]

Much of the discussion about Creation centred on the debate as to whether the world is eternal (uncreated) and not liable to corruption or whether it is created and corrupted.[6] If the latter, one must find a cause for this corruption. For instance, the Stoics place the blame on a fire which dissolves everything until Providence continues to regenerate the world in conflagration. For the

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2 See H.G Liddell and R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon*, 9th ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 985. Philo's common use of "Cosmos" demonstrates how widely the world was described with this term; Philo uses cosmos around 640 times [Adams, *Constructing the World*, 59]. In light of his research, Adams provides five assumptions evoked by the word cosmos in Hellenistic "cosmological speculation"; Cosmos is that which is characterised 1) by order, 2) by unity, 3) by beauty, that which 4) contains human beings, and 5) is an object of praise [pp. 43-44; 64-69].

3 *Timaeus* 92c: ζῷον ὁρατὸν τὰ ὁρατὰ περιέχον, εἰκὼν τοῦ νοητοῦ θεὸς αἰσθητος, μέγιστος καὶ ἄριστος κάλλιστός τε καὶ τελεώτατος κτλ. Earlier, Plato depicts Creation as a living and thinking creature—ζῷον ἔμψυχον ἔννουν—which contains other living creatures (*Tim*. 30cd); God gave Creation a soul (34b) and even considered it to be a "blessed god"—εὐδαίμονα θεόν—(34b). Cf. 55d. It is the universe, one whole of wholes—ἕν ὅλον ὅλων—(33a), a limbless body begat by God (33d-34a) and all of its parts are perfect and whole (32d). Most of the definitions of cosmos that followed were variations of Plato's. Cf. Hesiod, *Theogony* 116-117.

4 Philo, *Aet.* 94

5 Philo, *Ebr.* 30. In *Quod Deus* 31, Philo calls him 'the youngest son of God' (νεώτερος υἱος θεοῦ). Philo also presents three common views of the identity of Cosmos (*Aet.* 4): 1) as the heavens and the earth and all plants and creatures within them, 2) as heaven alone, or 3) as that which continues to exist through conflagration.

6 Philo, *Aet.* 7. Philo discusses this debate in detail in *De Aeternitate Mundi.* While both Aristotle and Plato considered the Cosmos ἄφθαρτος, Aristotle, in contrast to his teacher, considered the Cosmos ἀγένητος, not being able to conceive of a time πρὶν γεσέσθαι τὸν κόσμον (*Cael.* 300b17). Scholars debate whether or not Philo considered the world created *ex nihilo* or *creation aeterna*; others conclude that Philo's view on this matter is impossible to know [for a summary of the arguments see Kenneth Schenck, *A Brief Guide to Philo* (Louisville, KY: WJK Press, 2005), 63-64 and Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the* Timaeus *of Plato,* 453-458].

Stoics then, one could refer to one world as perishable and another as eternal.[7] For the Imperial Cult, it was barbarians who were responsible for the corruption of Mother Earth but the great Roman emperors for her redemption. Imperial propaganda abounded to ensure that Roman citizens were aware of this fact.[8] Furthermore, there were others who argued that God was the cause of disorder in the world—a view which Philo vehemently rejects as the most ungodly of all assertions, since according to him God is not the cause of destruction[9] and the Cosmos is ultimately indestructible.[10]

2. The Corruption of Creation in *Wisdom* and Romans

The cosmologies in *Wisdom* and Romans may contain elements from each of these philosophies. In light of the debate on the nature of Creation, both the sage and Paul refer to non-human Creation as that which was indeed created and therefore explicitly portrays attributes of its Creator.[11] However, our comparison reveals that the greatest difference between the two authors is found in their ideas about the nature of the corruption of Creation.

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7 Philo, *Aet*. 8. For this reason, it can be said that "what Chrysippus envisages as taking place at the conflagration is *change* rather than *destruction*," [Adams, *Constructing the World*, 55]. When the term destruction is used of Creation, it refers to a world-cycle in the view of conflagration rather than the Cosmos as a whole, which is made up of endless world-cycles [Adams, *Constructing the World*, 54-55]. Philo, however, does not seem to understand Chrysippus in this way (*Aet.* 94).

8 See chapter 10.

9 Philo, *Aet.* 106. He bases this on the fact that God is the only author of order, beauty and life as all who base their views on truth know.

10 See Philo, *Op.* 7*, Som.* 2.283*, cf. Conf.* 114. For Philo, "the cosmos is *not* a battleground scarred by the struggle between God and the forces of materiality…For all its ontological vulnerability the cosmos is indestructible, its immortality ensured by the will and providence of the creator," [Runia, *Philo of Alexandria and the* Timaeus *of Plato,* 455-456.] For a discussion of Philo's view of Creation in all of his works, see F.H. Colson, *Philo*, Loeb, vol. IX (London: William Heinemann, 1941), 172-173.

11 For more on the similarities between *Wisdom* 13 and Romans 1, see the history of comparison section above.

Wisdom Texts	Romans Texts
The origins of the Cosmos are wholesome and the poison of destruction is not in them, neither does Hades have a throne on earth, for righteousness is immortal (Wis. 1.14-15).	For Creation was subjected to futility against her will, but the one subjecting her did so in hope, for even Creation herself will be liberated from the bondage of corruption into the glorious freedom of the children of God (Rom. 8.20-21).

For the sage, God created the world without Death, but fools invited Death into the Cosmos and go on to use Creation for their own pleasure. Although the sage admits that fools invited Corruption into the Cosmos, he never goes so far as to say Creation is corrupt—instead "the origins of the Cosmos are wholesome and the poison of destruction *is not* in them, neither does Hades have a throne on earth," (Wis. 1.14). It seems that, like the righteous, Creation has never been, nor ever will be, effected by decay; the only jurisdiction Death has is in the world of the wicked, whom Hades corrupts and enslaves.[12]

Perhaps the sage's cosmology here is similar to Philo's, who at one point is so intent on maintaining the purity of the world that he redefines Moses' statement, "the earth was corrupted," by saying that what Moses really meant was "all flesh had corrupted its way on the earth."[13] So likely, for the sage, it is not that the Cosmos is corrupt, but that the wicked within the world have corrupted themselves. That is to say, for the sage, Death and corruption exist "not in the forces of the created world but rather in the concrete choices of human beings."[14]

In contrast, Paul says Creation is a slave subjected to the regime of Sin and Death. Only Christians have freedom from this regime, and until the day this freedom is fully realised, Creation shall remain in bondage. Not only is Creation susceptible to corruption, but God is the one who subjected her to that state. While this conclusion would not fare well with the sage (or Philo), Paul might consider *Wisdom*'s interpretation inconsistent with scripture and also with reality.[15]

Such divergences between the sage and Paul might be explained by different tendencies of thought in their world. For example, Gabriele Boccaccini describes three major trajectories of thought which dominated Second Temple Judaism—Zadokite, Enochic and Sapiential Judaism. In Zadokite Judaism, the worldview centred on the temple and the cult, which

12 See Michael Kolarcik, "Creation and Salvation in the Book of Wisdom," in *Creation in the Biblical Traditions*, ed. Richard J. Clifford and John J. Collins (Washington, DC: The Catholic Biblical Association of America, 1992), 100-101.

13 Philo, *Quod Deus* 140-141.

14 Michael Kolarcik, "Universalism and Justice," in *Treasures of Wisdom: Festschrift for M. Gilbert*, ed. N. Claduch-Benages (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1999), 291-292.

15 Notice here that Paul uses a divine passive.

maintained and restored the creative order "by reminding of God's commitments and removing sin."[16] Such a perspective was not without challenge, especially within Enochic Judaism, which considered the covenant "disrupted by the presence of the third party, that of the devil," who along with fallen angels worked behind God's back to introduce sin and evil into the world.[17]

Within Sapiential Judaism however, "human well-being depends not on obedience to a covenant but on living in harmony with the order (or Wisdom) of the universe, which God planted there at the time of Creation."[18] Sapiential Judaism refuses to attribute any wrongdoing to God or to admit that God's Creation is corrupted.[19] Whereas the sage would fall within Boccaccini's "Sapiential Judaism," Boccaccini places Paul in a variegated form of Enochic Judaism.[20]

Although it is debatable as to whether these groups were as clear-cut as Boccaccini presents them,[21] we find such *tendencies* of thought convincing. For example, the difference between Sapiential tendencies of thought and Enochic ones could account for why the sage saw Creation as an uncorrupted warrior and Paul as a wounded slave. Therefore, our comparison highlights the contrast: *for the sage, Creation is a cosmic conqueror executing retribution, and for Paul, a subjected slave expecting redemption.*

16 Gabriele Boccaccini, "Inner-Jewish Debate on the Tension between Divine and Human Agency in Second Temple Judaism," in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and his Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 12.

17 Ibid., 12-13. See also G. W. E. Nickelsburg, *1 Enoch*, Hermeneia (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 47.

18 Boccaccini, "Inner-Jewish Debate," 13. Cf. H. H. Schmid, *Gerechtigkeit als Weltordnung* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1968), 15-77.

19 Boccaccini, "Inner-Jewish Debate," 14.

20 See Ibid., 18-21. Cf. Martinus C. de Boer, *The Defeat of Death* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1988), 85-91.

21 For example, although the sage would fall more in line with the tradition of Sapiential Judaism, he includes evil powers as part of the problem of the fall even though he does not develop it as much as the Enochic tradition. Although Reese argues that the sage did not officially belong to any particular school of thought, one can see a greater influence by the Sapiential tradition [James M. Reese, *Hellenistic Influence on the Book of Wisdom and Its Consequences* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1970), 160]. Furthermore, while Boccaccini places Paul's thought as an offspring of Enochic Judaism, one can find elements from the other groups within his letters as well.

Wis. 5.20-23	Rom. 8.19. 22-23
And the Cosmos will fight beside God against the deranged ones. As from a well-rounded bow, accurate missiles of Lightning will proceed, and they will leap from the clouds toward the mark. And Hail Stones full of wrath will be thrown from a catapult. The water of the Sea shall be indignant against them, and the Rivers, falling from shear heights, shall wash over them. A power wind shall oppose them, sifting them like a storm.	For the eager longing of Creation anxiously waits for the revelation of the children of God…For we know that all Creation groans and suffers birth pangs until now. But not only Creation, but also we ourselves, those who have the first portion of the Spirit, groan in ourselves while we eagerly await adoption, that is, the redemption of our bodies.

Therefore, the sage does not see Creation begging for redemption from Death as much as exacting revenge on those who belong to him. Cosmos has fought for God's people in the past and shall finish the task once and for all at God's visitation. The World has even changed its elements to benefit the righteous and punish their enemies. Yet for Paul, Creation has not yet been redeemed, nor shall she be destroyed: she is promised a once and for all *future* transformation at the *eschaton*. In sum, the sage still maintains that Cosmos implied order and unity, but Paul's Ktisis was in a state of disorder and division, subjected to futility. Therefore, *for the sage, Cosmos continuously implies praise and beauty, while Paul's Ktisis currently implies futility and corruption but underlines hope.*

3. OT Sources and Parallels for the Personifications

The personification of nature and her parts in the OT falls within one of two contexts—praise or judgment. In the context of praise, the Psalmist and Isaiah portray the hills clothing themselves in joy; the fields and wilderness rejoicing; rivers and trees clapping their hands; and mountains singing and shouting.[22]

Rather than from contexts of praise however, both the sage and the apostle develop their personification of the World from OT judgment texts, from which they take the personification of nature and then personify Creation. Drawing from texts where the parts of nature are used as divine weapons such as Hab. 3.11 and Zech. 9.14,[23] *Wisdom* personifies Creation as a fellow warrior with God. In order to do this, the sage draws from the judgment texts of Isa. 42.13 and 59.16-20 in his depiction of the war Lord and combines these passages with the role of nature in the Exodus plagues. Rather than just a weapon in the hands of God however, Creation becomes an active agent of

22 Ps. 65.12; 96.12; 98.8; Isa. 35.1; 55.12.

23 See Chrysostome Larcher, *Le Livre de la Sagesse*, 3 vols., vol. 1 (Paris: Gabalda, 1983), 393.

destruction upon Egypt and the reigning champion of Israel who simultaneously punishes the wicked and provides for the godly through the plagues.

Instead of drawing specifically from Exodus, Paul draws his personification from Genesis 3 as well as the motif of the earth groaning and mourning found within texts such as Isaiah 24[24] and Jeremiah 12. However, modifying this motif in light of the gospel, Paul presents Creation as no longer moaning or groaning at the coming of the Lord to destroy it; rather, she moans and groans for the coming of the Lord to redeem her. Whereas Paul's personification of Creation being redeemed may allude to the new heaven and earth (such as is presented in Isaiah 65-66), the sage does not mention an eschatological new Creation per se.[25] According to Gaventa, this can be explained by the fact that the sage views the world from a sapiential perspective, which desires to explain "the present order and live within it, confident that the righteous will eventually be vindicated by God," however, Paul, from a different perspective, "needs to interpret God's radical intervention into the present order and its consequences for believers."[26]

4. Context and Purpose

Both the sage and Paul personify Creation in contexts concerning the *eschaton* in order to show the relationship of Creation with the righteous. *For the sage, Creation is so intimately associated with the pious that she fights for them as their defender at the divine visitation. For Paul, Creation is so intimately associated with the Christians that she suffers with them as their fellow prisoner until that day.* Again, whereas the sage focuses more on Creation's role against the wicked and for the righteous as exemplified in Exodus and Numbers, Paul discusses her relationship with the righteous as interpreted from Genesis 3 and perhaps the new heaven and earth motif in Isaiah.

The depictions in both *Wisdom* and Romans are emotionally moving. Paul's picture of Creation groaning in birth pangs serves as an appeal to sympathy and a promise for redemption, while the sage's graphic portrayal acts as a warning for the fools and a promise of relief to the persecuted elect.

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24 See Jonathan Moo, "Romans 8.19-22 and Isaiah's Cosmic Covenant," *NTS* 54 (2008), 74-89.

25 See J.J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 215 and J.J. Collins, *Jewish Cult and Hellenistic Culture* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 153-157. Cf. Burton L. Mack, *Logos und Sophia* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 96; Mack believes Wis. 19.6 should be understood in light of the new Creation.

26 B.R. Gaventa, "The Rhetoric of Death in the Wisdom of Solomon and the Letters of Paul," in *The Listening Heart*, ed. Kenneth G. Hoglund (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 140; she argues that Paul operates out of an apocalyptic perspective and the sage out of a wisdom perspective (p. 139).

Therefore, both passages serve as encouragement for the godly in the midst of suffering. We shall discuss this context and the personifications' purpose further in the next chapter.

Conclusion

In conclusion, due to frequent personifications of the parts of nature in the ancient world, the personification of Creation by the sage and the apostle would have captivated the audience as it communicated novel ideas through a familiar venue on a common topic. Those aware of similar literature would have appreciated the artistry, and those familiar with the debate over the nature of Creation would have been intrigued by the interpretations, as the sage and the apostle both personify Creation in a discussion of the final intervention of God and in association with righteous suffering.

The significance of investigating Creation personified is that it reveals foundational premises of the respective authors: for the sage, the climax of God's work is his Creation of the incorruptible Cosmos who has in the past and will in the future fight *for* the righteous against the wicked. For Paul, it is the "already but not yet" work of God, who created the world as well as submitted it to corruption, from which Creation eagerly awaits redemption *with* the righteous.

Chapter 14

Common Thread

Introduction

So far our comparison of the personifications of evil by the sage and Paul have shown us significant similarities and differences in their respective anthropologies and soteriologies, while the comparisons of the personification of Creation have revealed foundational premises concerning their cosmology and eschatology. We have yet to conclude, however, in which contexts and for what overall and primary purposes the sage in the book of *Wisdom* and Paul in Romans employ personification.

From our research, we infer that in *Wisdom* and Romans, personification is most often employed in contexts dealing with theodicy. Theodicy has been defined as "the attempt to defend divine justice in the face of aberrant phenomena that appear to indicate the deity's indifference or hostility towards virtuous people."[1] Both the sage and the apostle concern themselves with issues of theodicy as they struggle to render evil and justice intelligible.[2] According to Winston, the sage has a "virtual obsession with problems of

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1 James L. Crenshaw, "Theodicy," in *ABD*, ed. David Noel Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 444. At times, this attempt is not so much a "Rechtfertigung Gottes angesichts des faktischen Leides, als vor allem die Rechtfertigung des Übels im Gegenüber zum Wissen um Gottes Heil für den Menschen, " [A. Jäger, "Theodizee und Anthropodizee bei Karl Marx," *SThU* 37 (1967), 14]. It has become more generally defined as "any attempt to render suffering and evil intelligible," Antti Laato and J.C. De Moor, eds., *Theodicy in the World of the Bible* (Leiden: Brill, 2003), x. See also Max Weber, *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie I* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1920), 571-573.

2 For more on the many aspects of the problem of evil see John S. Feinberg, *The Many Faces of Evil* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2004), 21-27. For discussions of theodicy in *Wisdom,* see David Winston, "Theodicy in the Wisdom of Solomon," in *Theodicy in the World of the Bible*, ed. Antti Laato and J.C. De Moor (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 525-545; B.R. Gaventa, "The Rhetoric of Death in the Wisdom of Solomon and the Letters of Paul," in *The Listening Heart*, ed. Kenneth G. Hoglund (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1987), 127-141; for Romans: see I. Howard Marshall, *New Testament Theology* (Downer's Grove, Illinois: IVP, 2004), 306 and B. J. Oropeza, "Paul and Theodicy: Intertextual Thoughts on God's Justice and Faithfulness to Israel in Romans 9–11," *NTS* 53 (2007), 58.

theodicy."[3] As for Romans, the term theodicy itself was actually coined from this letter.[4]

In their attempts, *Wisdom* and Paul discuss three problems of evil: 1) the problem of death, 2) the problem of Israel's sin and the resulting divine punishment upon her, and 3) the suffering of the righteous. Within these discussions, they employ personification to distance God from the entrance of evil into the world, to deflect attention away from the problem of righteous suffering to the positive sides of the experience, and to defer the solution for the suffering of the righteous to the future.

Therefore, this chapter will be divided up into three parts related to these three problems of evil: personification and the entrance of Death, personification in the history of Israel, and personification in righteous suffering. First, we shall argue that the sage's personification of Death (Wis. 1.13-15; 2.23-24) and Paul's personification of Sin and Death (Rom. 5.12-21) serve to distance God from the entrance of evil (1). We shall then discuss the personifications of Wrath in *Wisdom* and of the Law in Romans. Whereas the sage uses personified Wrath to distance God from unjust punishment, Paul's personification of Nomos distances God's work of salvation from the Law which condemns and increases trespass (2).

Finally, we shall propose that the sage uses personifications such as Lady Virtue to divert attention from the current suffering of the righteous, and Creation to defer to a future solution for their suffering. Similarly, Paul personifies Creation to deflect attention away from the problem of Christian suffering and to defer the solution of this problem to the future. He also refers to the Holy Spirit as an aid in times of affliction.

1. Distancing God from the Origin of Death

According to Carl Jung, theodicy is not a theological problem but a "universal religious nightmare."[5] Such a nightmare is unavoidable within a framework which holds that God is both sovereign and good: if God is the author of all, then it seems that he is the author of evil as well. At times, he seems unjust, ordaining evil things to happen to good people or punishing his people too harshly.

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3 Winston, "Theodicy," 525. According to Mack, the main concern for the sage is the tension of how both the good and the wicked coexist in the cosmos [Burton L. Mack, *Logos und Sophia* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1973), 106-107].

4 It was coined by G.W. Leibniz (1646-1716), who combined the subject with the adjective in the rhetorical question of Rom. 3.5—μὴ ἄδικος ὁ θεός? [Laato and De Moor, eds., *Theodicy*, x].

5 C.G. Jung, *Answers to Job*, trans. R.F.C. Hull (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 91.

Therefore, from real crises of faith rather than from intellectual exercises,[6] from "bleeding hearts" rather than curious minds,[7] Jewish works such as Job, Habakkuk and 4 *Ezra* address this very problem: "Why does God allow or ordain evil?"[8] Basically, these works answer this question with a query of their own: "Who are you to question God?"[9] While counting it all as mystery is one way to treat the problem of evil,[10] there are other ways to deal with this dilemma as well.[11]

1.1 The Problem of Evil in the OT and Beyond

One way some OT writers treated this issue was to claim that both good and evil come from the Lord.[12] As Hebrew thought progressed, however

6 See J.J. Stamm, "Die Theodizee in Babylon und Israel," *JEOL* 9 (1944), 99.

7 Artur Weiser, *Psalms* (London: The Westminster Press, 1962), 593.

8 For a summary of this development in the prophets see Bernhard W. Anderson, "Sin and the Powers of Chaos," in *Sin, Salvation, and the Spirit* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1979), 74-81. For the problem of evil in post-exilic writings, see James L. Crenshaw, "The problem of Theodicy in Sirach: On Human Bondage," *JBL* (1975), 55-58.

9 See also Philo, *Prov. II.29.* Cf. "I will praise the Lord of Wisdom" in *ANET*, 434-437.

10 The idea that suffering was a mystery which humanity could not understand "lent credence to the suggestion that innocent suffering was disciplinary, purgative even, and to the much later belief that all would be set right in the future existence"; in Job and Qoheleth, however, this idea leads to resignation and despair respectively [James L. Crenshaw, "Popular Questioning of the Justice of God," *ZAW* 82 (1970), 387, 390].

11 For example, one can claim God is morally neutral, in which event, evil is merely a relative or human construct. The Epicureans had a similar idea: the gods were unconcerned with humanity so that there was nothing one could do to offend the gods or to please them. [See J. Louis Martyn, "Epilogue: An Essay in Pauline Meta-Ethics," in *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and his Cultural Environment*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 173]. One can deny the existence of evil all together, since, in the end, God works so-called evil for good—'what you meant for evil, God planned for good' (Gen. 50.20). In this case, the end redefines the means. This is a strategy used by Chrysippus who illustrates by saying that bed bugs keep one from sleeping too much and mice from not cleaning enough (Plutarch, *On Stoic Self-Contradictions* 1044d). Such a strategy is also used by Philo, who likens a perceived evil action by God to a doctor who might have to amputate a part of the body in order to save the rest of the body. No one blames the doctor for evil, Philo reasons, but they praise him for doing what is good rather than what is pleasant (*Praem.* 32-34). Cf. David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion in focus*, ed. Stanley Tweyman (London: Routledge, 1991), 126.

12 E.g. Isa. 45.7; 2 Samuel 24; Amos 3.6b; 1 Sam. 19.9; Ezek. 20.25.

(especially in the aftermath of crises),[13] it began to refuse "to acquiesce in the idea that evil as well as good proceeds from the divine nature."[14] Rather, God fiercely shuns evil.[15] This reaction led to extreme attempts to separate God from the beginning of evil setting up "a *radical* origin of evil distinct from the more *primordial* origin of the goodness of things."[16] Rather than placing the blame of evil on God then, these authors often blamed evil angels instead.[17] Thus, references to evil powers became a logical piece of an equation implemented to solve the tension of a good God in an evil world.[18]

However, just as stressing God's sovereignty calls into question his proximity to the work of evil, so also "Any attempt to free God from evil carries the risk of limiting God's power,"[19] calling into question his sovereignty. That is to say, the further one distances God from evil, by emphasising the responsibility of other agencies, the more one limits the power of God; on the other hand, the less one emphasises the responsibility of other agencies, the closer the relationship of God to evil experiences.[20] Furthermore, an admission of an autonomous evil power in the world contains hints of the ideology that the cosmos is divided between God and independent powers of evil, both in contention with one another.[21]

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13 This progression was possibly influenced by Iranian thought, see Daniel G. Reid, "Satan, Devil," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*, ed. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin (Downers Grove: Ill.: IVP, 1993), 862-863; see also E.P. Sanders, "Paul," in *Early Christian thought in its Jewish context*, ed. John M. G. Barclay and John Sweet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 122; T.J. Wray and Gregory Mobley, *The Birth of Satan* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 75-94 and Crenshaw, "Justice of God," 384.

14 Jeffrey Burton Russell, *The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity* (London: Cornell University Press, 1977), 220.

15 Ibid., 220.

16 Paul Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil* (Boston: Beacon, 1967), 233.

17 It seems Ben Sira was in the minority who did *not* defer to an evil power (see Gabriele Boccaccini, *Middle Judaism* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 105.

18 Paolo Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic and its History*, trans. William J. Short (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 231-232. Influenced by "the resurgence of mythic narratives during the apocalyptic period," [Neil Forsyth, *The Old Enemy: Satan & The Combat Myth* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1987), 10], authors began to build on the foundations laid in the OT such as the clever serpent in paradise and the angelic accuser in Job [Sydney H.T. Page, *Powers of Evil*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1996), 11].

19 Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic*, 225.

20 Cf. John M. G. Barclay and Simon J. Gathercole, *Divine and Human Agency in Paul and his Cultural Environment* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2006), 1-7. There, Barclay gives three models of divine and human agency. In the first model, the two agencies are in competition so that "the more one is said to be effective, the less can be attributed to the other" (p. 6). In the second model, there is kinship between the two so that "the two are essentially identical when properly aligned" (pp. 6-7). In the final model, there is a "non-contrastive transcendence." Here, divine agency grounds and enables human agency (p. 7). He goes on to admit that these models become muddled with the introduction of evil powers (p. 7).

21 Russell, *The Devil*, 168-169.

Yet still, within these Jewish works, the writers declined to give in to a "proper framework"[22] where evil powers rule autonomously. Instead, they sought "to construct an interpretation which would allow for a separate principle of evil and yet confine its power."[23] Consequently, some authors began to combine elements from a framework that included autonomous evil powers within a matrix that held that God is absolutely sovereign.[24] This tension became characteristic of Hebrew religion which never completely divorced evil powers from God,[25] despite the fact that the evil angels still work *as if* they were against him.[26]

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22 Forsyth, *Old Enemy*, 10.

23 Ibid., 10.

24 E.g. 1 *Enoch*. For more on evil powers in Jewish and Christian writings see Clinton E. Arnold, *Powers of Darkness* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1992); Wesley Carr, *Angels and Principalities* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981); Gerald Messadie, *The History of the Devil*, trans. Marc Romano (London: Newleaf, 1996); Stephen F. Noll, *Angels of Light. Powers of Darkness* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 1998); Hugh Rowland Page, *The Myth of Cosmic Rebellion* (Leiden: Brill, 1996); Elaine Pagels, *The Origin of Satan* (London: Penguin, 1995); Jeffrey Burton Russell, *Satan* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981); and Heinrich Schlier, *Principalities and Powers in the New Testament*, 4th ed. (London: Burns & Oates, 1966).

25 Russell, *The Devil*, 183, 219. What Carson concludes concerning the tension between human responsibility and divine sovereignty can be said about the tension between evil powers and divine power as well: for the monotheist there is no escape from this tension, "except by moving so far from the biblical data" that one perverts "the biblical picture of God." Although "the shape of the tension changes dramatically" when one moves from book to book, community to community, and genre to genre, never is the tension resolved so that there is both divine sovereignty and evil powers but no tension, [D.A. Carson, *Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981), 220].

26 If the construct which holds God as both the author of good and evil causes one to ask: "How can a good God be the author of evil," this construct where there are evil powers in the world causes one to ask, "How can a sovereign God allow this to happen" or in the words of Abraham in the *Apocalypse of Abraham*: 'God, why did you give Azazel so much power so that he could ruin us?' Once an author insists on maintaining God's Sovereignty in the midst of an autonomous evil power, the argument comes full circle. If, for example, the author holds that the devil's power is inferior to God's, then the fact that God allows evil to persist logically connects God once again to the work of evil. In other words, the fact that God can destroy evil powers but does not, could cause one to infer that God allows evil to exist for his own purposes. "Even if some saw the devil as the always active and obstinate opponent of God, they were never able to think that this opposition could finally conclude in the devil's favour. God is the stronger, and, *if he wished*, could annihilate the devil at any moment. If he has not yet done so it is because the moment has not yet arrived. At this point an idea begins to take hold, that in some way the devil has a part in God's plan," [Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic*, 230]. Therefore, evil powers as a tool of God becomes a rational progression in the framework to which later authors subscribe but did not develop. Cf. Rudolf Bultmann, *New Testament and Mythology and Other Basic Writings*, trans. Schubert M. Ogden (London: SCM Press 1985), 14.

1.2 The Problem of Evil in *Wisdom* and Romans

It is this framework which *Wisdom* and Paul inherit—a framework which sought to remove God from the blame of evil by pointing to evil powers, while simultaneously attempting to enforce the idea of his sovereignty. In order to do this, the sage and Paul employ personifications of evil. By default, then, the same tension of autonomous evil powers together with a sovereign God in the world arises in their works.[27]

Therefore, in accordance with the inherited framework, the sage and Paul also oscillate between emphasising a concept of a sovereign-but-good God and a concept of autonomous forces of evil.[28] In the former, God (Θ) employs (→) the work of the personifications or powers of evil (Π) for his own divine purposes (→). One could portray this framework in the following diagram: Θ→Π→ (e.g. God sends a lying spirit in order to deceive the prophets).[29]

Alternatively, in the latter framework, the personifications of evil are not agents of God, but rather nemeses in opposition (⇔) to him. This framework could be depicted as Θ⇔Π (e.g. God's archangel and the devil fight for the body of Moses).[30] Whereas the absolute sovereign framework presents evil powers in the service of God [Θ →Π→], the autonomous power framework portrays evil as independent and opposed to him [Θ⇔Π].

The influence of the latter framework upon the former caused a mutation: now evil personifications and powers are presented as sometimes in opposition to God and at other times in his employment. Yet all the while God remains in control despite the contention, which in reality, he uses for his own purpose [Θ→(Θ⇔Π) →]. It is this last depiction which best represents the conception found in *Wisdom* and Romans,[31] since both authors oscillate from the sovereign-but-good God side of the model [Θ→Π→] when they desire to emphasise God's power to the autonomous-evil-power side of the model [Θ⇔Π] when they desire to remove God from the work of evil.

Therefore, when it comes to the existence of Death in the world, *Wisdom* operates from an autonomous evil power framework [Θ⇔Π] in order to distance God from the origin of evil. Even though the Lord had created creation and humanity without the rule of Hades and the poison of destruction, Death entered into the world through the Devil and wicked people. Such a

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27 However, neither the sage nor Paul gives evidence that they find a problem with this tension. Rather, their emphasis lies in the role and effects of the personification of evil among humanity as well as humankind's partnership with them. Subsequently, there also is a stress upon God's remedy for these effects.

28 Cf. J.J. Collins, *Jewish Wisdom in the Hellenistic Age* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1997), 83-84.

29 1 Kings 22.22.

30 Jude 1.9.

31 Cf. Ernst Käsemann, *New Testament Questions of Today* (London: SCM Press, 1969), 125.

depiction goes against the sovereign-but-good God concept;[32] however, the sage does not maintain an autonomous evil power framework throughout his work but oscillates from this idea [Θ⇔Π] back to the former conception [Θ→Π→]. For instance, even though God did not make Death, he still has power over it (Wis. 16.13). So also, the sage says that God used the plague of serpents upon the elect to remind his people of his deliverance (16.5).[33]

Like *Wisdom*, Paul also inherits the tension that goes along with his tradition.[34] There are times in Romans when Paul emphasises the sovereign-but-good God side of this model and others where he emphasises the autonomous-evil-power argument.[35] For example, in Rom. 5.12-21, there is no mention of Sin being used to further the purpose of God. Instead, Paul places the work of Sin in opposition to the work of God. As with Satan in Rom. 16.20, Sin is presented as an autonomous evil force that partners with humanity to work against God.[36]

Nevertheless, "we may imagine that this form of dualism (Sin *versus* God) was not entirely satisfactory to Paul, since it meant that God is not in charge."[37] So despite the sin of humanity, the trespass provoking role of the Law, the current state of the world, and the work of Satan, Paul maintains the sovereignty of God. For example, humanity disobeys God, but God binds them

32 According to Collins, this "apparent metaphysical dualism is inconsistent with the dominance of God and wisdom in the rest of the book," and in most of the OT. [Collins, *Jewish Wisdom*, 190]. So also Winston concludes: "For a Jewish sage…to insist that not only was death not part of the original divine design for humanity, but that it is some sort of primeval entity that was not entirely subject to God…is hardly compatible with the biblical monotheism to which he was heir," [Winston, "Theodicy," 526].

33 Similarly, in the martyrdom of the elect, the reality is that the unjust murders of the righteous by evil men were God's test to prove the godly as worthy of God (Wis. 3.1-6).

34 Although Paul never sets forth a "systematic 'satanology…the fragments of evidence preserved in the Pauline letters seems in most respects compatible with that which we find in the common 'satanology' of Judaism—though in Paul these are transposed into a Christian framework," [Reid, "Satan," 864].

35 See Sanders, who says that Paul comes close to attributing autonomous power to Sin [E.P. Sanders, *Paul, the Law and the Jewish People* (London: SCM, 1983), 70-81].

36 Within Paul's letters, one could conclude that Paul considers Satan as an independent power struggling against God from passages such as 1 Thess. 2.18; 3.5; 1 Cor. 7.5, 2 Cor. 2.11, 14. On the other hand, in 1 Cor. 5.5 and 2 Cor. 12.7, Paul still connects the work of the enemy to the service of God. In Rom. 11.32, it is God who binds humanity under disobedience, but in 2 Cor. 4.3-4, the god of this world is the one who blinds humanity. Thus, according to Paul, Satan, in conformity with a framework of an autonomous power, is one who strives against the growth and purity of the church but whose work, in conformity with sovereign-but-good side of the framework, can be used for the salvation and purity of believers. Despite his work for and against the saints, Satan will be destroyed by God.

37 Sanders, "Paul," 120.

to disobedience.[38] The holy Law increases trespasses but only in order to reveal Sin. Satan seeks to corrupt the church, but God will crush his head.[39] Creation has been bound to futility, but God is the one who has placed her there—possibly even under the rule of evil powers.[40]

It makes little difference whether God subjected the world to general corruption or to actual corrupting powers; the result is the same, as are the promises. The very sufferings which arise from such bondage, work for the good of the saints[41] who, in due time, will be gloriously redeemed with Creation when God shall overturn Adam's corruption as he destroys the evil people and powers which work against his church.[42]

1.3 The Use of Personification rather than Evil Angels

Whereas in the OT, extracanonical Jewish works, and most of the NT, evil powers are connected primarily to fallen angels, the sage and Paul spend more time on personifications of Sin and Death than on the fallen angel *par excellence*,[43] namely the devil or Satan.[44] While the sage and the apostle assume that this evil angel exists, they do not speculate or theorise in detail concerning his origin—nor do they ever fully define the extent of his authority. Whereas the sage places Lady Wisdom, Creation and the wise in contradistinction to Death, the devil and their fools, Paul finds a discontinuity

38 See Oropeza, "Theodicy," 66.

39 While the sage holds that God shall destroy the ungodly who belong to Death, as opposed to Paul, he never mentions the destruction of Death or the Devil (although he might take it for granted).

40 See C.K. Barrett, *The Epistle to the Romans* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 165-166.

41 Rom. 8.28.

42 Paul's conclusion in Rom. 16.20— that Satan's head will be crushed under the very feet of the Christians—is a good example of this tension that arises from the framework he adopted. God has the power to destroy Satan; however, in line with the autonomous evil power model, Satan opposes God. If God can and will destroy Satan, but has not already, then it follows that God has a purpose for allowing Satan to remain. Thus, God remains responsible for the evil that opposes the believers. Paul does not, however, go so far as to say that God is using Satan (Sin or Death) for his own divine purpose.

43 See Heinrich Schlier, *Principalities and Powers in the New Testament*, 4th ed. (London: Burns & Oates, 1966), 14. See also Sacchi, who states that in Second Temple Judaism one finds the devil either presented as 1) the "principle of evil" which explains the origin of evil, but that is "no longer active" or 2) the one who is currently active in opposing both God and humans [Sacchi, *Jewish Apocalyptic*, 211].

44 The only other possible mention of evil angels in Romans or *Wisdom* is the Destroyer in Wis. 18.20-25 and possibly the angels in Rom. 8.38.

between this present age (characterised by the rule of Sin, Death and Law) and the age to come when Grace will reign and Creation shall be redeemed.[45]

If the sage and apostle assume evil powers do exist, why do they refer to Death and Sin rather than to the devil or other evil angels? One possible explanation (as we discussed in the introduction) is that the sage and Paul do consider Death and Sin as evil powers. Such a conclusion is popular among scholars.[46] Another explanation is the possible influence of another literary source. We have already shown in chapter 3 how the sage draws from the death pact in Isaiah 28 for his personification and in chapter 8 how Paul most likely draws from Genesis 3-4 and possibly even *Wisdom* 1-2 for his.[47]

However, whether the authors considered the personifications as real powers or not, it is likely that the sage and the apostle prefer to draw from these parallel passages where Sin and Death are personified (rather than mentioning evil angels) because the sage wanted to emphasise the result of the cooperation with evil powers while Paul wanted to stress the cause as well. That is to say, the sage desires to contrast death with immortality; therefore, the sage's personification of Death underlines the result of wickedness in contradistinction to life through Wisdom.

In addition to highlighting the result of evil, namely Death, Paul aims to underline human sin as part of the cause as well. In short, as with placing the blame on evil angels, the personifications of Sin and Death serve to distance God from evil in the world. However, the personification of Sin goes further by stressing humankind's responsibility for evil while the personifications of Death underline their disastrous end.

In sum, our comparison shows that through evil humanity's cooperation with evil personifications, the sage directly seeks to exonerate God from the blame of evil; however, what the sage takes on directly, by using personification, Paul achieves indirectly, so that neither of the writers portrays God as orchestrating this encounter but place sole blame on humanity and personified evil. Such presentations led to the question: Why did God allow this to occur? To this question, however, neither the sage nor apostle attempts an answer. [48]

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45 See J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1980),137. Cf. Albert Schweitzer, *The Mysticism of Paul the Apostle* (New York: Seabury, 1968), 55; and Andrew T. Lincoln, *Paradise Now and Not Yet* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 169-195.

46 For arguments that Sin and Death represent evil powers, see the history of research above.

47 See also Isa. 25.8 in light of his personification of Death in 1 Corinthians 15.

48 Perhaps this is because 1) they do not follow their inferences to their logical conclusions; because 2) they did not see the tension as a problem; because 3) they just were not concerned with it, or because 4) they did not know the answer. Cf. Weber, *Religionssoziologie*, 572.

2. The Problem of Israel's sin and God's justice

The sage and apostle also use personifications to distance God from problems that arise from the history of Israel.

Passages from *Wisdom*

But the experience of Death also touched the righteous, and a multitude was slaughtered in the wilderness. But Wrath did not remain for long;
for quickly the blameless man, bringing prayer and the incense of propitiation, fought with the weapon of his own worship; he opposed Wrath and put an end to the misfortunate event, for he demonstrated that he is your servant;
and he conquered Wrath not with strength of body, not with power of weapons, but with the Logos he subdued the Punisher recalling the oaths of the fathers and the covenants.
For when the dead had already fallen upon one another in heaps, he stood between Israel and Wrath, and he drove Wrath back as he cut off the path to the living.
For the entire world was on his long robe, and the glory of the fathers were carved on the four rows of stones, and your majesty was on the diadem of his head
To these things the Destroyer yielded, and he was afraid of these; for the experience of Wrath was sufficient. (Wis. 18.20-25)

Passages from Romans

Nomos speaks to those under the Law so that every mouth shall be shut and all the world accountable to God (Rom. 3.19)

But Nomos entered so that trespass would abound (Rom. 5.20)
To those of you who know the Law, do you not know that the Law lords over a person as long as that person lives…So then, people, through the body of Christ, you were also put to death to the Law, that you can be with another, the one who was raised from the dead, in order that we may bear fruit to God. For when we were in the flesh, the passions of our sins were working in our members through the Law so that we bore fruit to Death. But now, we have been set free from the Law, dying to that in which we were enslaved, so that we serve in the newness of the Spirit and not the old letter of the Law. (Rom. 7.1, 4-6)

For Moses writes concerning righteousness from the Law that the one doing these laws shall live by them. However, Righteousness by Faith says: "Do not say in your hearts, 'Who shall ascend into the heavens,' this is to bring Christ down; neither say, 'Who shall descend into the abyss,' this is to bring Christ up from the dead" But what does Righteousness say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart"—this is the word of faith which we proclaim. (Rom. 10.5-8)

For the sage, the OT narratives such as God sending the snakes and acting in rage against Israel in the wilderness do not fit well with his conception of the nature of God and Israel; therefore, in order to avoid the embarrassing

passages where God loses his temper and punishes righteous Israel,[49] the sage draws from an autonomous evil power framework and stresses the role of Wrath rather than the role of God in the original account.[50] As we argued in chapter 7, rather than denying the slaughter of Israel as he does in *Wisdom* 16,[51] the sage distances God from the "unjust" event. By personifying Wrath and by connecting it with the other personifications (such as Death and the Destroyer), both Israel and God are exonerated. Israel's test was not due to sin nor was God's punishment unjust, since the experience was not really punishment at all.

This is similar to the purpose of the personification of Death in *Wisdom* 1-2. Although there the personification distances God from evil in Creation, here the personification distances God from the work of evil in the wilderness. Not only does this reading present God in a more respectable light, it also downplays the sin of Israel and sets them up as heroes who overcame Death.

In contrast, Paul's struggle with the OT is not that Israel must be presented as righteous; it is that the Law of Israel seemed not to lead to their righteousness but to their punishment instead. Therefore, Paul reinterprets the Law as increasing trespass rather than providing salvation;[52] and (as we argued in chapter 10) he personifies Nomos to demonstrate negative aspects of the Law in order to distance it from God's work of salvation. To increase the distance, Paul personifies Nomos as a lord who, like Sin, reigns over those walking in the old letter of the Law rather than in the newness of the Spirit. Even after exonerating the Law by insisting that it is holy in Rom. 7.9-25, Paul still sets it over against God's work in Christ in Rom. 8.3, so that "when all this is said, the law still looks like an enemy."[53]

Even Nomos confesses that he is not the way to righteousness and points to Paul's gospel instead. Similarly, Paul personifies Dikaiosyne as the voice of

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49 The sage also discusses the justice of God upon the wicked since he is just in punishing them as well. According to Winston, there is a complaint in Alexandria against the God of Israel that God's punishment upon the Egyptians was too severe, [Winston, "Theodicy," 540-541].

50 Larcher suggests that the satan in Job is similar to the personification in this passage [Chrysostome Larcher, *Le Livre de La Sagesse*, 3 vols., vol. 3 (Paris: Gabalda, 1985), 1033-1034].

51 The oscillation between the sovereign-but-good model and the autonomous evil power framework can be seen in a comparison of this passage with Wis. 16.1-12, where the sage places God closer to the attack of serpents upon Israel in the wilderness by connecting wrath to God and by highlighting the divine purpose of instruction. Such positioning could cause one to question the character of God. In order to maintain the goodness of God and in spite of this connexion of God with the suffering of righteous Israel, the sage emphasises the mercy and salvation of God from his own wrath while down playing the seriousness of the original event.

52 See the complaint against the Law by the author of 4 *Ezra* (3.20-22).

53 Barrett, *Romans*, 149.

the gospel in order to surpass, if not contradict, that which was written in the Law. Therefore through the trope, Paul distances the saving work of God from the sin-increasing Law without having to disconnect him from it. With this done, Paul must clarify that the Law is not evil. So now, in Rom. 7.9-25, Paul uses the personification of Sin to distance the Law from evil.

3. Righteous Suffering

Although *Wisdom* and Paul deal with the problems of the origin and work of evil in the world and in the history of Israel, the reality of the current suffering of the saints must be addressed as well. One way to get around the fact that the righteous suffer is to doubt their righteousness altogether.[54] This, however, led to a common idea that any suffering must be the deserved lot for those who have sinned. It is this very interpretation that writings such as 2 Maccabees endorse[55] and those such as Job contend. Such an idea causes some to complain against the Lord and make the accusation that either they experience his wrath without cause [56] or that the punishment does not fit the crime.[57] In contrast to this retribution theodicy, where suffering is the result of disobedience, neither the sage nor apostle blames the sufferings of the righteous on sin. This leads to the question: Why do the righteous suffer if they do not deserve it? [58]

For the sage, the problem with righteous suffering begins with his presupposition that there is a moral order in the universe "rooted in the irresistible might of a sovereign Lord," who controls reality through Sophia.[59] Since the sage dismisses the belief that suffering indicates God's wrath and

54 With this done, "the burden and finitude of human life is explained in terms of the divine wrath provoked by the pride of men and the consequent burden of guilt… here all human life, being sinful, stands under the constant operation of the wrath of God," [Johannes Fichtner, "ΟΡΓΗ," in *TDNT*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992), 404].

55 E.g. 2 Macc. 12.45, where remarkably the only soldiers who died in battle were those holding hidden idols. Cf. Philo, *Prov. II.*60.

56 Fichtner, "ΟΡΓΗ," 402. E.g. Ps 88.15; Job 16.9; 19.11.

57 E.g. 4 *Ezra* and Lamentations. For Lamentations as an example of God's wrath going too far, see Edward L. Greenstein, "The Wrath at God in the Book of Lamentations," in *The Problem of Evil and its Symbols in Jewish and Christian Tradition* (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 29-42. Cf. Winston, "Theodicy," 540-541 and Martin Buber, *Two Types of Faith* (New York: Scribner, 1961), 165.

58 Leon Morris finds three forms of suffering in the apostle's matrix: 1) suffering which results from sin, 2) suffering due to persecution and 3) suffering which simply arises from this imperfect age [Leon Morris, *The Epistle to the Romans* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 319]. Within Romans, Paul has the last two forms in mind. Cf. J. Christiaan Beker, "Suffering and Triumph in Paul's Letter to the Romans," *HBT* 7, no. 2 (1985), 108.

59 Winston, "Theodicy," 525.

since he embraces the idea that God controls all reality, the sage must redefine apparent reality against what he submits is truly real—so that, for example, "It is only 'in the sight of fools' that the righteous are forsaken."[60] Thus, for the sage, evil is not as much of a problem as it is a paradox.[61]

Whereas Paul also insists on the sovereignty of God, the problem of righteous suffering for him begins more specifically with the gospel. In Romans, due to the work of Christ, there is now no condemnation for or accusation against believers.[62] According to Paul, the afflictions of the righteous do not occur as God's wrathful response to the sin of the godly; rather, the believer boasts in afflictions which lead to character, hope and glory. In fact, it is for God's sake that they even suffer at all (Rom. 8.36).

However, from Paul's comments about the blessed state of the glorified child of God who has perpetual peace and constant access to their divine Father, one might get the impression that the life of the justified is perfect, free from affliction. Such an impression would not line up with reality however, [63] naturally causing one to question this "blessed" Christian life Paul has proposed. Surely, God would not allow his heirs to suffer; and if they do suffer and die, how can they hope? Besides, how can those who have been set free "from the law of sin and death" die?[64] In order to "head off criticism of his teaching" by those who would scoff at the promise of a person boasting peace with God while facing sufferings of all kinds,[65] Paul discusses why the righteous suffer in Rom. 5.3-5 and why Creation suffers with them in Rom. 8.19-23.

Therefore, in order to solve the problem of why the righteous suffer, both authors 1) reinterpret suffering, 2) promise future rewards, 3) demonstrate the benefits of the event, and 4) employ personification. Rather than seeing suffering as a sign of a curse, the sage and Paul proclaim that it is actually evidence of blessing. Therefore, in Wis. 3.1-4.20, the sage reinterprets three experiences of sufferings: martyrdom, barrenness and untimely death, which occur *despite their blessed status of election*. Paul reinterprets "affliction,

60 J.A.F. Gregg, *The Wisdom of Solomon* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1909), 25-26. Cf. Philo, *Det.* 47-49 where he redefines the reality of Genesis 4: It was not really Abel who died but Cain (!).

61 See Armin Schmitt, *Das Buch der Weisheit* (Würzburg: Verlag, 1989), 26.

62 See Rom. 8.1, 33.

63 This is especially the case for the life of Paul himself (e.g. 2 Cor. 4.8-9, 6.4-10, 11.24-29). There would have been those among Paul's audience who would have been aware of Paul's personal afflictions [James D. G. Dunn, *Romans 1-8*, WBC (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1988), 264].

64 Douglas Moo, *The Epistle to the Romans*, NICNT (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 509.

65 Ibid., 302.

distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, and the sword,"[66] which occur *despite God's work in Christ and because of their blessed status as adopted children of God*.

Therefore, "Die θλίψις ist für den Apostel nichts Zufälliges, sondern Notwendiges."[67] That is to say, rather than a sign of a curse, suffering is the necessary experience for obtaining future blessing. Suffering does not invalidate the Christian blessing of peace and grace, but serves as a ground of boasting.[68] Suffering is therefore reinterpreted as a paradox by Paul as well: that which seems to be "calamity is salvation; demolition, edification; the abyss, the foundation; the hopeless life, the life full of hope—wherein faith is proven and hope is substantiated."[69]

Second, both authors focus on the positive results of the experience. According to the sage, suffering is a test which approves the godly and a sacrifice which pleases God; even that which the wicked interpret as torment results in validation, and that which the wicked conceive as a horrible death results in a God-honouring offering.[70] For the barren, suffering is not to be compared to virtue; and for the short-lived, to the corruption from which they have been rescued. For Paul, the believer can boast in the hope of the glory of God, which eventually results from affliction—a boast in the knowledge that affliction produces perseverance, character and hope (5.3-4).

Next, both authors promise a time when the godly will receive future rewards, a divine visitation when the reality of their elect status will be revealed and a final day when their glory will far outweigh their past sufferings.[71] For *Wisdom*, there will be a return from Hades. Death is not

66 Cf. Rom. 8.36, where in the following verses Paul responds to Psalm 44. According to the apostle, the Psalmist is mistaken; afflictions, which have characterised the people of God all along, do not mean that God has forsaken or rejected his people. See Richard B. Hays, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (London: Yale University Press, 1989), 59-60 and C.E.B. Cranfield, *The Epistle to the Romans*, 10th ed., ICC, vol. I (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2001), 440.

67 Heinrich Schlier, *Der Römer Brief* (Freiburg: Herder, 1977), 146.

68 Paul's thesis does not fully answer the problem of evil. Why is it necessary for the believer to suffer in order to achieve glory? Is the reception of the Holy Spirit insufficient for sanctification; if the believer is only waiting on God for perfection, then why does God tarry?

69 Schlier, *Römer*, 146: "Denn in solchem ,,Rühmen", das in paradoxer Weise das Unheil als Heil, den Abbruch des Lebens als Aufbruch, den Abgrund als Begründung, das irdisch-hoffnungslose Leben als Hoffnung versteht, ist das alles erfassende Vertrauen erwiesen und die Hoffnung erhärtet."

70 According to Kolarcik, the sage is "not so much denying the reality of suffering…as much as he is denying the interpretation" of it by the wicked [Michael Kolarcik, *The Ambiguity of Death in the Book of Wisdom 1-6* (Rome: Pontifical Biblical Institute, 1991), 83].

71 Furthermore, Andrzej Gieniusz argues that Paul is saying much more than this; the apostle proclaims, in the face of a retributive view of suffering, these afflictions do not have the weight to thwart the future glory [Andrzej Gieniusz, *Romans 8:18-30: Suffering Does Not Thwart the Future Glory* (Atlanta, GA: Scholars Press, 1999), 285-290].

sealed as the fools supposed, at least not for the righteous. Instead, "At the time of God's visitation, the righteous will flare up like sparks running through stubble" (3.7). There is a surprise ending: an eschatological role reversal will occur as the righteous, who had died young, will judge the wicked who had lived long lives, and those who were formerly condemned will appear to condemn the nations, those persecuted will receive the Lord as their reward, his splendour as their crown.

Therefore, the evidence that *Wisdom*'s reality is indeed *reality* will be proven at the visitation when all things will be set right. So also for Paul, the suffering children of God will finally be revealed at the *eschaton*; their reward shall be the fulfilment of the hope for salvation,[72] the return to and escalation of lost glory,[73] the redemption of their bodies.

Finally, as our investigation has revealed, both authors utilise personification to achieve their rhetorical ends of comforting the righteous in suffering. The sage and Paul employ the trope to deflect attention away from the pain as well as to defer the solution of the problem of suffering to the future.

Wisdom employs the personification of Lady Arete to deflect attention from barrenness to the presence of virtue which truly provides a lasting legacy.

> Greater is barrenness with Arete;
> for immortality is in memory of her,
> because she is known before both God and men.
> they imitate her while she is present
> and long for her after she is gone;
> and in this age,
> having been victorious in the battle for undefiled prizes,
> she adorns her crown,
> and
> marches in a triumphal procession. (Wis. 4.1-2).

So also, the sage diverts attention from the problem of suffering to the personification of Creation, who exemplifies how God has never and will never abandon his people in hard times.

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72 Inherent in Rom. 5.5 is the promise of future redemption, which the term hope implies and the work of Christ secures. What this "hope of the glory of God" is, Paul reveals in Romans 8.

73 See Harry Alan Hahne, *The Corruption and Redemption of Creation* (London: T & T Clark, 2006), 199.

Cosmos is the defender of the righteous…
stretching out against the unrighteous for the sake of punishment,
but resting, to benefit those trusting in you…(Wis. 16.17, 24).

For the whole of Creation served your commands
and was perfectly formed again in its own kind from above,
so that your children would be protected from harm…
for with reference to all things, Lord,
you magnify and glorify your people
and you did not disregard them;
rather you stand by them at all times and in every place
(19.6, 22).

The sage refers to Sophia for the same purpose (Wisdom 10):

And they were saved by Wisdom.

In the midst of the flood,
She saved again.
Taking the helm,
She steered the righteous one to safety…

And she knew the righteous one,
and She kept him blameless before God
even in the midst of his affections for his son.

Leading the righteous refugee away from the wrath of his brother,
She prospered him in his labours and multiplied his hard work.

In the midst of his oppressors,
She was there and she made him rich;
She protected him from enemies
and rescued him from ambush.

And at the end of the contest,
She awarded victory to him,
in order that he might know that godliness is all powerful.

And of the righteous one who was sold,
She did not abandon him.
But She delivered him from sin.

She went down with him to the pit
and did not forsake him in bonds,
but brought to him the sceptre of the kingdom,
authority over those tyrannizing him.
Revealing the lies of those who spoke against him,
She gave to him eternal glory.

She rescued the people, the holy and blameless seed,
from a nation oppressing them.
She entered into the soul of a servant of the Lord
opposing tyrants with signs and wonders.

She gave to the holy ones the reward of their labours:
Leading them in a marvellous journey
Their shelter by day,
a flame of stars throughout the night.

She carried them across the sea,
leading them through much water.
But She flooded their enemies,
casting them up from the depths of the Abyss.

Because of her work, the righteous ones plundered the ungodly.
And they sang, LORD, your holy name.
And in one accord, they praised your defending hand.
For Sophia opened the mouth of the dumb,
and empowered the tongues of babes.

Sophia truly saves her servants from sufferings.

Similarly, through personification, Paul shows that believers are not alone in their suffering—they have the company of the Spirit and Creation.

For in our weakness, the Spirit comes to our aid…
And with unutterable groans makes intercession on our behalf (8.26).

Sufferings produce a hope that will not disappoint because
God has given us the Holy Spirit (5.5).

For we know that all Creation groans and suffers birth pangs
even until now.

> But not only Creation, but we ourselves groan,
> we who have the first portion of the Spirit, groan
> while we eagerly await adoption,
> the redemption of our bodies (8.22-23).

In fact, as we have seen, both authors personify Creation as on the side of God and his suffering people, using the personification to stress the relationship of Creation to their audience. Paul demonstrates how great this future glory is for the small band of believers: the personified world revolves around them. For the sage, the importance of the elect is found in the fact that Creation fights for them.

By utilising personification the sage and Paul also divert some of the attention away *from* the problem of why the children of God suffer *to* Creation personified in order to defer the solution toward the future. The sage's picture of Creation as a warrior for the elect and as Paul's picture of it as a slave with the saints would affect the emotions of the reader and, by magnifying their importance, would encourage them to persevere in suffering until that day when all shall be made right.

For the sage, at the *eschaton*:

> Cosmos will fight beside the Lord against the deranged ones (5.20).

But Creation is not the only one who will exact judgment:

> Dynamis condemns the foolish;
> and on that day of examination,
> Dike will not pass them by (1.3, 9).

The act of Logos in the past serves as a pattern for the fool's future. Judgment was severe for those who persecuted the godly:

> All-powerful Logos, a relentless warrior,
> leapt from heaven from the royal throne
> into the midst of a land of destruction
> and
> filled all things with death (18.15-16).

So terrible shall it be also for the wicked at the visitation of God.

While the sage uses personification to promise the righteous a *future retribution for the ungodly*, Paul uses the personification of Creation to promise *future redemption for the saints.*

> For the eager longing of Creation anxiously waits
> the revelation of the children of God.

For then, she herself shall be set free,
unbound from the bondage of corruption
unto the glorious liberty
of the children of God
(8.19, 21).

Creation's groaning shows just how great their redemption will be when the children of God are revealed. Just as Creation, in her necessary present suffering, is restless as she strains and aches for the future glory to be revealed in the sons and daughters of God to whom her fate is tied, so also believers wait for the revelation of the Son of God from whom their destiny is derived.

Conclusion

From our evaluation of individual personifications in *Wisdom* and Romans in relationship to all of the personifications in the respective works, we inferred that both the sage and Paul primarily employ personification in discussions of theodicy, specifically, 1) the origin of evil, 2) the problem of Israel's sin and the consequential judgment for it, and 3) the present suffering of the elect. We concluded that the personifications of Sin and Death follow the tendency of the day to distance God from the origin of evil by placing the blame on evil angels. We also suggested that, even though the sage and Paul may have seen these personifications as evil powers, they refer to personification also to underline humanity's responsibility for evil and its fatal result.

Furthermore, we compared how the sage personifies Wrath to exonerate Israel by distancing God from the event (so that they are not punished for sin but tested because of their righteousness) while Paul personifies Law to condemn Israel so that Israel's Law is distanced from the saving work of God in order to explain why the Law failed to save Israel.

Finally, this chapter compared the sage's treatment of the problem of why the righteous suffer with Paul's. This comparison demonstrated that both authors reinterpret suffering as a blessing rather than a sign of sin, promise future rewards for present suffering, describe the benefits which result from affliction, and employ personification to comfort the elect. The sage uses personifications to promise final retribution for the wicked on the one hand and divine salvation from suffering for the godly on the other. Although Paul does not use personifications to stress retribution, he employs the trope to highlight future redemption and to remind the believers that they are not alone as they wait for that day.

Section IV: Conclusion

Both the sage in *Wisdom* and Paul in Romans blame the origin of evil in the world on the partnership between personifications and wicked humanity. The result of this partnership sets Creation up to be a warrior against the corrupt in *Wisdom* and for her to be subject to corruption in Romans. The sage and Paul propose that salvation from Death and Sin comes through participation with God's agent—Sophia and Jesus Christ respectively. For the sage, rejection of personified Death and intimacy with personified Wisdom leads one to immortality; similarly for Paul, participation with personified Grace and Righteousness and the person of Christ leads to redemption from Sin and Death and thus to everlasting life. The ultimate solution for death and suffering is future reward and retribution *by* Creation in *Wisdom* and future redemption and glory *with* Creation in Romans.

The differences here reflect the authors' respective beliefs concerning the epoch of God in history. For the sage, God's work culminated in his work through Sophia at Creation and in the Exodus which serves as a precursor to his work at the *Episkope*. God's throne partner, Sophia, created the world *before* Death intruded into it. However, Paul's solution to Death is that the second Adam came into the world *after* Sin and Death had already entered it through the first Adam. For Paul, God's work through Jesus Christ at his death and resurrection will reach its triumphant conclusion at the *Parousia*. If Christ had to die for sins, all must be sinners and in need of redemption which results from a participation in the death and resurrection of the Messiah. For this reason, those who participate in the saving agency of Sophia (*Wisdom*) and Jesus Christ (Romans) are considered the elect. Despite afflictions which could cause some to question this chosen status, the elect will finally be revealed as so at an eschatological event.

Therefore, both authors primarily employ personification in association with 1) the origin of Sin and Death, 2) the current afflictions of the righteous and of Israel, and 3) the future eschatological resolution. In *Wisdom* and in Romans then, personifications chiefly serve to explain the reason for evil (distancing God from the blame), to encourage the righteous within suffering (diverting attention away from the problem), or to point to the solution for evil and suffering (deferring the resolution to a final day).

Therefore, in order to exonerate God and to explain the phenomenon of death, the sage personifies Death as a lover and king of fools. Corruption makes a pact with the impious and enters the cosmos through the envy of the devil. In order to comfort the barren, the sage employs the personification of

Arete to divert attention away from childlessness to that which really matters: Virtue.

Furthermore, the sage personifies Cosmos, Logos, Dynamis and Dike to defer the solution of righteous suffering to a final retribution. To answer why so many 'righteous' Israelites died in the wilderness, rather than presenting God as the slayer of Israel, Wrath and the Destroyer are personified as warriors who slaughter the people of God. In *Wisdom*, Sophia is the saviour of the elect, the alternative to Death; her and Creation's deliverance of the godly throughout their afflicted history would encourage the faithful to remain that way in the face of persecution and possible apostasy.

Toward similar ends, Paul personifies Sin and Death as lords who enter the cosmos and rule over humanity. Such a depiction distances God from the work and effects of evil while serving as a foil to his work in Christ and the effects of the gospel. To answer why the Law did not lead Israel to righteousness, Paul has Nomos enter to increase trespass and rule over the unredeemed. However, through the personification of Sin and Law, Paul demonstrates how Nomos actually works to reveal Sin, exonerating the Law but not fully redeeming it, condemning the world in sin, but not saving them from it. Dikaiosyne arises to reinterpret the writings of Moses, showing that, rather than the impotent Torah, the gospel has always been the solution to Sin.

Paul also personifies Creation as part of his theodicy. She suffers with the saints and her fate is tied to theirs; when they receive the redemption of their bodies, then she will be emancipated as well. The Spirit also remains with the believers in the midst of their affliction; he is there to lend aid and offer prayers. As a conduit of God's constant love, he provides hope to the elect that all these sufferings shall work together for their good and never separate them from the presence of their Father.

In *Wisdom* and Romans, then, the Powers of Personification march into texts which concern the paradox of evil in order to exonerate God and to explain the history of Israel, to point away from the present problem of suffering and to ensure a future solution.

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